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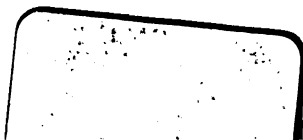
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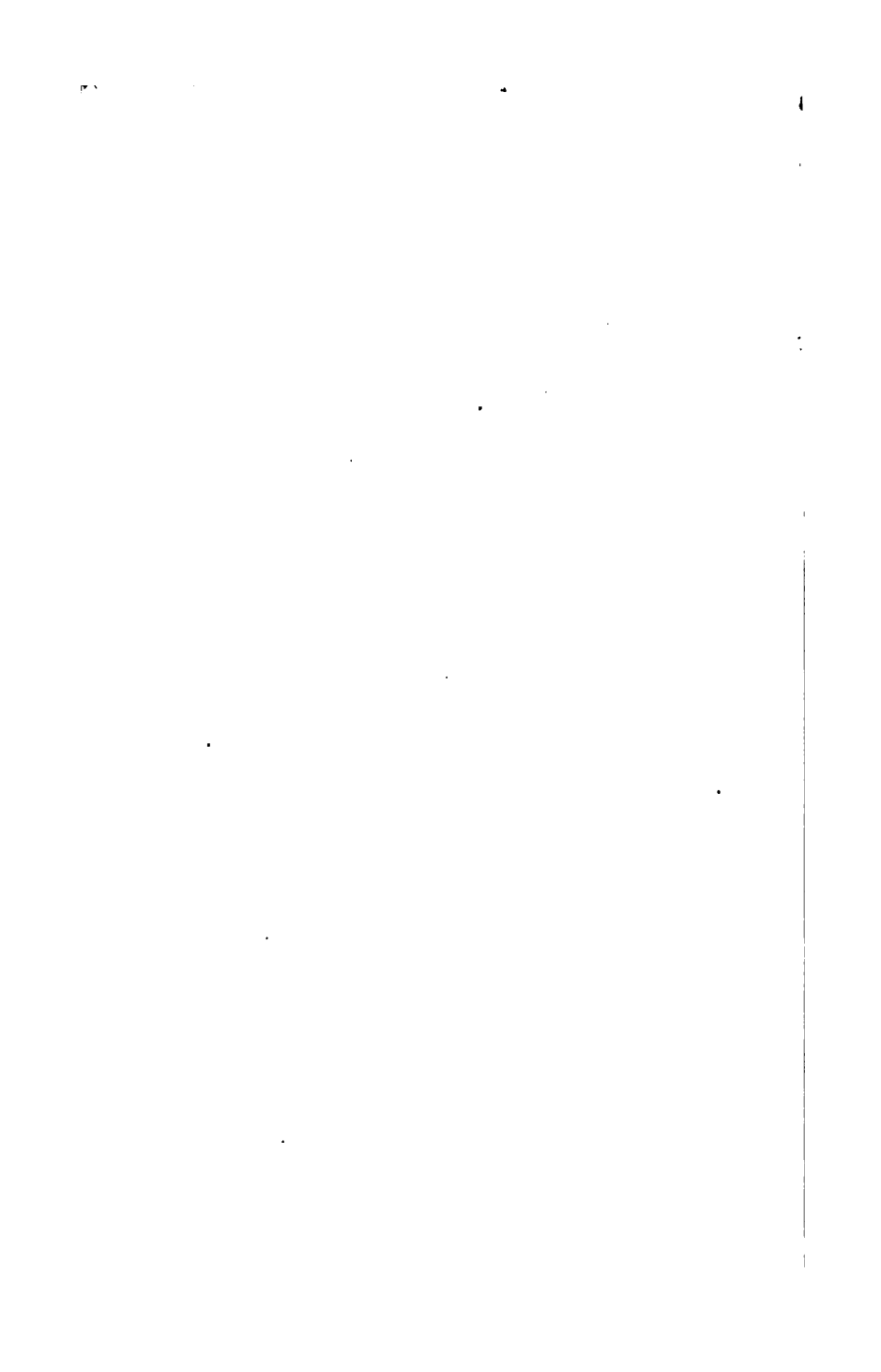
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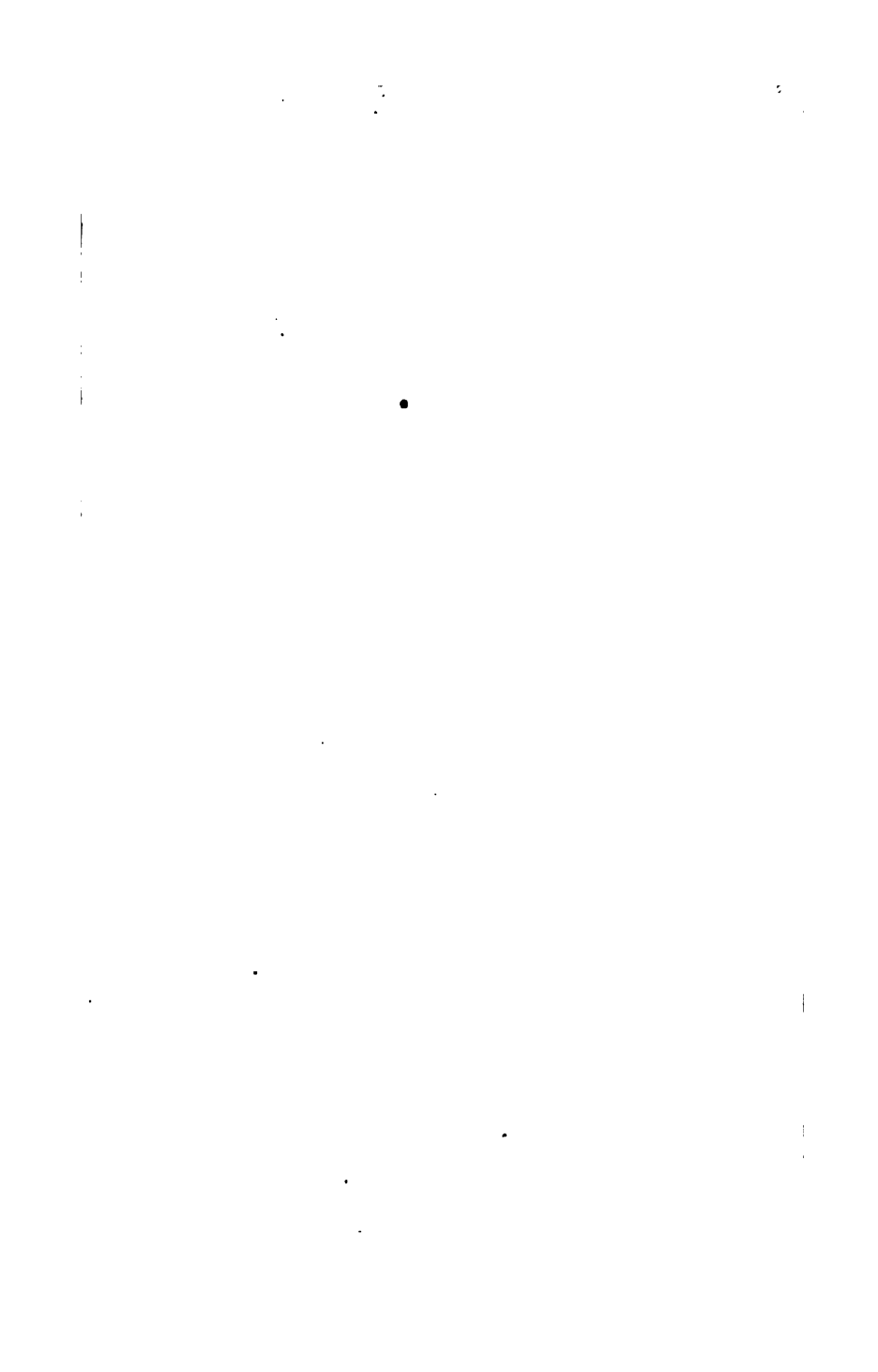




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WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

THE
GREAT AND GOOD;

ILLUSTRATED

IN SIX SKETCHES.

Biography

What though the *great*, the *good*, the glorious fall?
He reigns whose kingdom ruleth over all.

—Talk not of talents;—what hast thou to do?

Thy duty, be thy portion *five* or *two*;

Talk not of talents;—is thy duty done?

Thou hadst sufficient, were they *ten* or *one*.

Lord, what *my* talents are I cannot tell,

Till Thou shalt give me grace to use them well.

JAMES MONTGOMERY.

LONDON :
SEELEY, JACKSON, AND HALLIDAY,
54, FLEET-STREET.

1855.

210. C. 280.



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INTRODUCTION.

It is scarcely needful in any way to introduce the following brief sketches of the lives and characters of six servants of God. There ever have been, from the earliest times, persons who have been citizens of both worlds, eminent amongst their fellows upon earth, in their different spheres, and according to their varied gifts; while they have left behind the most abundant testimony that they were pilgrims travelling on to their eternal rest, and so using their gifts and graces, that they were intently earnest for the good of their fellow-men, and ever about their Heavenly Father's business. There have been many volumes written describing the deeds of the great, the wise, the learned, and the valiant, yet most of these have recorded gifts used for earth, and deeds springing from worldly motives, and done for earth's glories or rewards. No one ought to undervalue the persons, the lives, or the deeds of any of earth's great men, if they have not achieved their

greatness by wrong, or risen to their greatness upon the miseries of others : but we look with a far higher veneration upon those whose mission is not for the minds and bodies of men alone ; but who, knowing the value of one immortal soul, labour to make its priceless worth known to the world at large ; and who, following in the steps of the Saviour of the world, seek to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to visit the prisoner, to liberate the captive, to teach the ignorant ; while, above all, they point their fellow-men to that blood which cleanses the guiltiest, and which has purchased salvation for every sinner that comes to it for pardon and peace.

Such are good, and such are great ; and such are the persons whose actions and characters are here touched upon : they have passed from time into eternity ; their works do follow them, but we have them as our examples, that, like them, we may be “ up and doing,” for God and men on earth, so that, with them, we may be numbered among the just made perfect, and rejoice with God throughout eternity.

THE GREAT AND GOOD.

WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.

BORN, AUGUST 24, 1759. DIED, JULY 29, 1833

God gives to every man
The virtue, temper, understanding, taste,
That lifts him into life, and lets him fall
Just in the niche he was ordain'd to fill.
To the deliverer of an injured land
He gives a tongue to enlarge upon, a heart
To feel, and courage to redress her wrongs.

COWPER.

THE study of biography is peculiarly attractive to the human mind, and is in many respects more so than that of general history. In the former the attention is mainly kept on one character, and thus fixed, assists the

memory in retaining facts more or less connected with the object of attention. If the individual whose life we peruse has lived at a period of general historical interest, and his position in society has been exalted or remarkable, it is impossible to trace the events of his life without becoming more or less acquainted with those of other eminent individuals; and thus we are studying unconsciously general history, with perhaps a greater prospect of remembering the incidents, than if the work were professedly a history of the period when the subject of the biography lived. But there is a danger incident to the study of the biography of great men. It is this. The appellation of "great" may be applied without much regard to the moral character of its subject, and thus the reader, especially if young, may be fascinated by the influence which eminent ability ever commands, and may be tempted to try the ascent of fame's steps rather than prepared to sacrifice worldly greatness where its attainment compromises the nobler principles of religion and moral uprightness. But when we light upon one who has lived at a period of historical interest—who, possessed of unusual powers of mind, has never used them to attain eminence at the expense of religion—who preferred the one thing needful to all earthly considerations, we can then present the character to the study of the young without fear; and while we seek not to repress their aspirations after eminence, we can point to the picture and say, "Go thou and do likewise." The name of William Wilberforce must arouse the feelings of every lover of humanity, whatever be his clime or extraction. Born at a period of remarkable interest,

when many great men flourished, he will bear comparison with any among them. Placed in trying circumstances, he was enabled, by God's grace, to triumph over them, and lived to see the accomplishment of the grand purpose of his life; a purpose worthy of the noblest mind—even the release from cruel bondage of thousands of his fellow-creatures, of a different complexion indeed from ourselves, but possessing the same undying principle within that frame which was exposed to continual cruelty. The object of the present sketch is not to present to the reader a life of the eminent man whose name it bears—this has been done already, in an enlarged and abridged form; but rather to endeavour to elicit from his personal history sufficient matter to place him before the reader in his true character, that, being dead, he may yet speak.

The town of Hull, in Yorkshire, lays claim to the honour of having been the birthplace of William Wilberforce. His family was an ancient one. His ancestors had long been settled in the county of York. The grandfather of the illustrious philanthropist filled the office of Mayor at Hull, and though possessed of considerable property, was engaged in the Baltic trade. Robert, the younger of his two sons, father of the subject of this article, was a partner in the house at Hull, where the illustrious William was born, August 24th, 1759. Of his early years there is little known, except that he was of small stature, and suffered from a distressing weakness of the eyes, which more or less afflicted him in after life. His mind was, however, then remarkable for its vigour, and a peculiarly amiable disposition endeared him to all who knew him. On

the death of his father, in the year 1768, he was removed to the care of his uncle and namesake, William, with whom he lived, at Wimbledon and in St. James's-place. While here he attended a school, the educational advantages of which do not appear to have been considerable. At this school he remained two years. The period of Wilberforce's life during which he resided with his uncle is interesting, in connection with his future career, inasmuch as he himself describes his mind as then first attracted to religious subjects; and there is every reason to believe that the impressions then produced were never altogether effaced amid the worldliness into which he was soon after almost forced, and beneath which he succumbed for a season. The character of the religion by which he was then attracted was decidedly evangelical. His aunt was a devoted admirer of Whitefield's preaching, and numbered among her friends many of the Methodist Connexion, who were followers of that remarkable man. The society of such persons was likely to influence the feelings of one at so tender an age, and it did so. The fear that Wilberforce was imbibing sentiments in religion of which so many among his relatives disapproved, induced them to remove him from what was considered so dangerous an influence. He returned to Yorkshire with his mother, who had visited London purposely to remove him, and he was, at the age of twelve, exposed to all the seductions of gay society, with the object of drawing away his mind from the subject which, as was supposed, too much engaged his youthful attention.

The attempts to alienate the boy from those things for which he had manifested a preference while under

his uncle's care after a time succeeded, and he indulged in gaieties for which an agreeable manner and a taste for music peculiarly qualified him. The school to which he was sent on his return to Hull was one in which he was subjected to little, if any, control, and the time which might have been profitably employed was squandered in gay society. Yet it appears, from the evidence of those who were his contemporaries at school, that he excelled all competitors in the art of composition, although he seldom commenced the allotted task until the last moment. It is worthy of remark that at this early period of his life the peculiar sympathy with the cause of the enslaved negro, which was afterwards the constant subject of his thoughts, manifested itself; he addressed a letter on the subject to the editor of the York newspaper.

The habits which young Wilberforce contracted after his return from his uncle's, as might have been expected, followed him to the University; and at Cambridge the time which ought to have been given to study, was too often spent in visiting and gaiety; but it is to be remarked that he was never betrayed into that dissipation which has ruined so many, and erred rather in idleness than in vice. The important features of Wilberforce's character are of course more prominent after his entrance upon public life; and this began so early as the year 1781, when, as member for his native place, he took part in a debate upon the laws of revenue; and on presenting a petition from his constituents forcibly attacked the laws as unjust and oppressive. It is as statesman and philanthropist we desire to view him, and therefore we must seek to

trace his career during the time he discharged the duties of a Member of the Imperial Legislature ; not minutely recording the events of his parliamentary and public life, but rather seeking to ascertain his claims to statesmanship. When we speak of Wilberforce as a statesman and philanthropist, we must remember that the grand philanthropic object of his life was accomplished as a statesman ; for had he not been in a position to represent a great constituency, it is improbable he could have acquired sufficient influence with those who held the helm of the State to produce that impression which, though at first insufficient to gain the desired object, was deep enough to render the repeated efforts at last successful. The period at which Wilberforce entered upon public life was indeed a remarkable one. That unhappy dispute which ended in the separation of England and America, was in progress, to be succeeded in a few years by continental convulsions, which involved this country, and all Europe, in a long war and consequent loss of blood and treasure. There were men of mighty intellect playing their parts on the stage of life. Edmund Burke had long entranced the House by his striking eloquence ; and Richard Brinsley Sheridan, already well known for his brilliant genius, had lately become a senator. Fox, too, already ten years in Parliament, was lately returned triumphantly for Westminster ; and, above all, the remarkable man whose name is so intimately associated with the history of George the Third's reign, had just become a member of that House over which he was destined to exercise such an influence. William Wilberforce and

William Pitt saw the light in the same year,—the former being the younger by three months ; and both commenced their parliamentary career at the earliest age which qualifies any one to be a member of the Imperial Legislature. The circumstances under which these remarkable men became acquainted are striking. After having successfully canvassed the electors of Hull, Wilberforce proceeded to London, where he remained during the time which elapsed between his canvass and the expected parliamentary dissolution. As might have been supposed, the member in embryo frequented the gallery of the building in which assembled those among whom he anticipated so soon being enrolled. Thither also, under similar circumstances, resorted the man whose career as a Minister of the Crown was hereafter to excite such different feelings in different breasts. The name of William Pitt must always be more or less remembered in connection with that of Wilberforce. The friendship which existed between these two eminent men, notwithstanding some serious differences on important subjects, tends to exhibit the character of the minister in a favourable light, and will ever remain a proof that integrity was a characteristic of him, whose enemies, in their eagerness to disparage his memory, would deny him this qualification. It is impossible to believe that if the celebrated minister had been deficient in integrity he could have maintained his place in the estimation of one whose name may be considered synonymous with that word.

There is no method, perhaps, which will enable us more thoroughly to appreciate the strength of character which Wilberforce possessed, than that of consider-

ing the intimacy subsisting between himself and Pitt. It cannot be denied that great talents are peculiarly attractive; and where their possessor evinces a friendly disposition towards us, we are naturally disposed to magnify the virtues, and cast the veil of concealment over his faults. Nay, it happens that a man of powerful genius will influence the conduct of his friend, and lead him away from the path which his conscience approves while he is scarcely aware what he is doing. If to genius be added unusual influence from family connections, and a similarity of feeling on some subject dear to our heart, the temptations to become a decided follower in all things seem well nigh irresistible. Now, such temptations were presented to the subject of this sketch in his intimacy with Pitt. That intimacy commenced, as we have seen, under peculiar circumstances, when both were in the spring of life, and all things mutually attractive. The genius of the minister was fully appreciated by his friend. The family connections of the former, in combination with his mental ability, promised to place him in a position of immense influence. What was it not in his power to bestow on his supporter? Above all, he truly sympathized with the feelings of Wilberforce on that subject which was ever uppermost in his thoughts,—the release of the poor enslaved descendants of Ham. How natural, then, would it have been for the latter to relax some of his strictness, and countenance in all his proceedings one of whose measures he for the most part thought so highly. Yet how different was the reality. We find that Wilberforce, acting under a sense of duty, considered himself bound to stand in

opposition to Mr. Pitt ; and, in so doing, to expose himself at the same time to the displeasure of the highest personage in the realm.

In the second year of his parliamentary career Wilberforce attracted the attention of the House by a speech which he delivered against the administration of Lord North, and received in consequence the applause of the Opposition party, many of whom doubtless calculated upon adding this promising young senator to their ranks ; but even thus early he gave proof that those who expected to find in him an unqualified supporter of any party were much mistaken in their man. When the death of Lord Rockingham had made a place for Pitt in the new administration under Lord Shelburne, Wilberforce, although inclined to forward the views of his friend's party, would not pledge himself to the support of the Government ; and this determination to be guided by circumstances as to how he should vote in Parliament seems to have been adhered to closely in his subsequent career. Thus he stood in the position of an impartial Member, uninfluenced by anything save a conscientious conviction of truth. That such characters are uncommon ought not to surprise us, when we bear in mind how many are running the race of life for the anticipated crown of wealth or so-called honour ; and this is rarely to be attained without some sacrifice of what the strictly conscientious esteem principle. That the worldly circumstances of Wilberforce placed him in a favourable position for acting an independent part is not denied ; he was possessed of ample pecuniary means. But they are ignorant of history and of human nature

who do not know that ambition may tempt successfully when worldly wealth fails to do so ; and that William Wilberforce was not naturally altogether insensible to the influence of that passion appears from remarks upon his own character in one of his private papers.

The ministry under Lord Shelburne, as is known, was soon out of office, to be succeeded by a heterogeneous administration, known by the title of the Coalition Ministry, and the manly opposition of Wilberforce to it, as exhibited in a speech in the city of York, displayed him in a character even superior to that which he had formerly borne. He now formed the design of seeking the representation of Yorkshire instead of Hull ; and having been first elected for the latter place, after the dissolution of Parliament, was returned for the important county above named, and took his seat May 14, 1784. Thus we find him, at the early age of four-and-twenty years, occupying a position which would have been eagerly desired by many of twice his age. A position like that which Wilberforce held, when supported by his ability, was indeed a stepping-stone to the highest honours of the state. Yet, if we trace his career, we perceive no symptoms of that disease which attacks so many similarly circumstanced. He still presents the same picture—conscientious, straightforward—principle ever his guide. When we bear in mind that his intimate friend, one who sincerely admired and loved him, was not only the head of a powerful administration (he had since become Premier), but peculiarly in favour with the sovereign of the land, we can well imagine the golden dreams which

would have passed through the minds of many similarly circumstanced. Our admiration of his independence, therefore, is not unmingled with astonishment when we find him in opposition to the very person who might have been supposed to possess the key of Honour's gate, ready to present it to his friend.

The time which elapsed between Wilberforce's return for Yorkshire and that when he is found in opposition to Pitt in Parliament, was occupied in close attention to his duties as a Member, and that cause which was so dear to his heart received his unremitting deliberation. We find him also bringing forward several measures which indicate the bearing of his mind ; as, for instance, the royal proclamation against vice and immorality, which the flagitiousness of the age so loudly called for—the foundation of a chaplaincy for the colony of New South Wales, and a bill for the better observance of the Sabbath.

It was in the year 1793 that the first great difference occurred between Pitt and Wilberforce, and this originated in the indisposition of the latter to war, in which the former deemed it expedient to embark the country. The condition of things in France was becoming more dangerous every day. Many quick-sighted politicians saw, as they thought, the necessity for England to take part in the struggle against France, into which she might hereafter be drawn when in a much more unfavourable position to embark in it. It is not the object of this sketch to enter into a discussion concerning the propriety of that war,—the termination of which was more distant than its great advocate anticipated, but not more so than the

glance of Edmund Burke descried ; it is sufficient for our purpose to observe that the subject of our remarks considered war unnecessary until many more efforts at pacification had been made ; and hence, after private intimation of his feelings to Pitt, and after abstaining, at the request of the Premier, from declaring his sentiments in the House of Commons when the measure was first introduced, he at length, in 1795, disclosed his opinion publicly by opposing the address on the speech of the monarch—usually considered the first trial of strength in an administration ; and afterwards supported the motion of Lord Grey for peace. This painful act of duty was performed by Wilberforce, under a full impression of the changed position in which it would place him.

An alienation took place between him and the Premier, and so much did his conduct on the occasion displease the king (George III.) that at a subsequent *levée* he passed, without open recognition, one for whom he had hitherto manifested the greatest respect and regard. Added to this, the course pursued by him drew down the displeasure of many of his Yorkshire constituents, and his seat seemed in peril in case of a new election. There cannot be a greater proof of the estimation in which Wilberforce was held by the Premier than the fact, that his opposition just alluded to cost Pitt an entire night's rest—a state of things which no other event had ever produced, except the tidings of the mutiny at the Nore.

When specifying conscientiousness and independence as the great characteristics of Wilberforce's statesmanship, we need only draw attention to his

conduct on the war question: he had every inducement to cleave to his friend at the head of the administration, and, if regardless of popularity, and the attainment of honours in the state, there was the great question of Slave Abolition to lead him in the same direction. Would not many have said, better sacrifice my opinion on one point than run the risk of losing support in the measure which I have so much at heart? Not so Wilberforce. Under the impression that war ought not to be entered upon at once, he preferred acting upon this conscientious conviction, leaving the issue of the other event in His hand who ordereth all things after the counsel of His will. In the same year in which he voted against Pitt's government in their proposed warlike course, he again lessened his worldly interest by also opposing the proposed increase of income to the Prince of Wales. The language which he used on the latter occasion was characterised by that manly refinement which sprung from a well-ordered mind. Speaking of the support which the Crown needs in times of modern civilisation as compared with its need in by-gone barbarous ages, he remarked, "In a time of unusual luxury the Crown must win for itself a higher measure of respect and veneration by a dignified simplicity than by vying with its wealthiest subjects in the number of its retainers and the magnificence of its entertainments."

We have thus seen the independence of Wilberforce manifested on two most trying occasions, and we pause to inquire whether we can trace this conduct to a deeper source than principle which is based upon *morality* only. It has been observed that the period

during which he resided under the care of his uncle was that in which, as he himself conceived, he first imbibed the religious sentiments which exercised so great an influence upon his after life. Change of society had never altogether effaced those feelings; and though his early career in the metropolis was that so common to most young men in his station, he was never fully satisfied with this style of life. His taste for music has been already alluded to, and of course such a taste presented many temptations to him in the circle in which he moved. His vocal powers are said to have elicited the unqualified praise of no less a personage than the one whose increase of income he so strongly contended against—the Prince of Wales. Added to these musical gifts, he possessed to a rare degree the power of mimicry—a power so acceptable to all but the subject of it. The manner in which he was cured of this passion is worth relating. The Chancellor, Lord Camden, had evinced much kindness towards him; having been asked by the friends of Wilberforce to witness the power of imitation possessed by the latter, he declined, repeating loud enough for the performer to hear, “It is a vulgar accomplishment!” “Oh, but,” replied the original speaker, “it is not imitating the manner; Wilberforce says the thing North would say.” “Oh!” rejoined the Chancellor, “every one does that.” This well-managed rebuke succeeded, and the subject of it relinquished the objectionable pastime.

A visit to the continent, in company with the well-known Isaac Milner, Dean of Carlisle, in the year 1785, seems to have helped to arouse the dormant seeds of

religion in his soul. He had for some time imagined that Milner possessed no deep feelings on religion ; but private conversation with the latter soon undeceived him, and these conversations and discussions were ultimately followed by good results. Speaking of his state of mind at this time, he writes, "Often while in the full enjoyment of all that this world could bestow, my conscience told me that I was not a Christian. I laughed and sang; I was apparently gay and happy, but the thought would steal across me, What madness is all this, to continue easy in a state from which a call out of the world would consign me to everlasting misery, and that when eternal happiness is within my grasp." It will be seen from this transcript of his feelings, that, as he had not fallen into profligacy while at college, neither had he imbibed those sceptical opinions then to be met among the higher classes, who studied Hume, Gibbon, and the mis-called philosophers of the French school.

On his return to England, after his continental visit with Milner, he seems to have become gradually changed, his inward feelings deepening, and it was shortly after this that he determined to open his mind to the well-known John Newton, then advanced in years. This he did by letter, and obtained an interview with that excellent clergyman a few days after. Of this interview Wilberforce speaks as, on the whole, encouraging, although he got nothing new from Newton except a good hint that he never found it answer to dispute, and advice not hastily to form new connections nor widely to separate from his former friends. The Scriptures were now the daily study of

Wilberforce. He selected his place of residence in London with especial reference to advantages for pastoral instructions, which he diligently attended. He sought the acquaintance of the religious, and withdrew his name from the clubs he had been accustomed to frequent, in order that he might avoid all unnecessary temptations. He seemed determined to commence, as it were, life anew. His journals from this time are filled with reference to the state of his religious feelings, and he complains of his short-comings and imperfections in a way which manifests how increasingly sensitive his conscience toward God was becoming every day.

The course which Wilberforce deemed it necessary to pursue in the war question required indeed unusual firmness to carry out. He had displeased his friend at the head of the administration; had been slighted by the monarch; had caused dissatisfaction among his constituents in Yorkshire; and had even raised suspicions in the minds of some that he leaned towards the revolutionary party in France. All this was trying. His conduct, besides, on the war question had excited hopes among the Opposition that he would soon become one of them in all their proceedings. Fox remarked, in a friendly visit which he paid to Wilberforce at this period, "You will soon see that you must join us altogether." But those who argued that because he had opposed Pitt's administration in some measure he must necessarily join the faction which sought the downfall of the Government altogether, understood not the character of the man whose course of conduct they ventured to anticipate. It was just because they were

and he was not of a party spirit that their anticipations regarding his future conduct so signally failed. It may be asserted that no man has ever lived of whom it might be more truly said that he was attached to no party. His opinions on this subject are found in heads of thought for a speech, published in the appendix to the second volume of the larger edition of his life by his sons. Among the heads may be mentioned the following :—"A party man no more questions his leader than a soldier his prince. The moral sensibility of party is gradually impaired by the habit of referring all to the party principle. Even party attachments cannot claim the dignity of true friendship and affection. I hate party, just in proportion as I love my country."

Such are some of his opinions on party spirit, and on these he acted when taking a course which exposed him to so much animadversion among his friends, and was calculated to render him unpopular with a large majority of the better and middle-classes in the kingdom. But if the course he took on the war question was in concert with the Opposition faction, it was not the prelude to his joining their ranks. Of Fox, the leader, he said, that though he loved the frank and kindly temper of that great man, and though he honoured his steady support on the abolition question, he regarded his public principles with decided disapprobation. In the month of October in the same year, when he joined Fox's party in their opposition to Government on the subject of war, he exposed himself to popular odium by supporting the Sedition Bill which the disturbed state of England, as he considered,

called for; and even gave his time and attention to perfect its details. This was, indeed, practical proof that he did not identify himself with any party in politics, but moved in that path which duty pointed out, even at the risk of personally injurious misrepresentation. His support of the bill just mentioned rendered him odious to the lower orders of the people, and it was impossible to foresee to what violence against himself this odium might lead. The remark of Wilberforce, above quoted, that party attachment and friendship cannot claim the dignity of true affection, if correct, proves that such was not the character of the intimacy between himself and Pitt. Despite the estrangement consequent upon their difference on the war question, they were again reconciled, and continued so until the death of the minister in 1800. It must not be forgotten that on another question in which Pitt was deeply interested, namely, the charge against Lord Melvill, whom he had raised to the peerage, Wilberforce found himself compelled by duty to support the decision against that nobleman, with whom, as Mr. Dundas, he himself had been so intimately acquainted.

The parliamentary career of Mr. Wilberforce extended from the year 1780 to 1825. During this period he sat four years for his native place, twenty-seven for the county of York, and thirteen for the small town of Bramber; his change to the latter place being rendered necessary by his declining years, and his inability to discharge the duties of so important a seat as that of Yorkshire to his satisfaction. The events which occurred during this long period of

time were indeed important. Commencing his political career when Lord North was premier, he retired from Parliament when Lord Liverpool occupied the same position ; having seen person after person called to the head of administrations, and leaving a vacancy—some by displacement consequent upon a change in public feeling, but many because of the “fell sergeant, Death.” One, alas ! died by the hand of an assassin, in the bloom of health and spirits. During the eight years which elapsed from his retirement into private life and his departure to a better world, four others filled that trying office. Wilberforce began his career when England’s horizon was darkened ; the connection between her and America was about to be snapped asunder—not gently loosed ; a state of things to be soon after followed by still more fearful calamities in the convulsions of the continental powers and the consequent effusion of the blood and treasure of this country as well as of theirs. He closed his earthly career when England had been at peace eighteen years. He began when the subject of Catholic Emancipation (as it is called), was so distasteful to the monarch of this country, that a highly-favoured minister gave up his office in consequence. He finished when that measure had been three or four years the law of the land, and when another measure, in the principle of which he was early interested (the Reform Bill of 1832), had also passed through both Houses of Legislature. A minute account of the political life of one thus permitted to outlive so many important events, would demand more space than is designed for this article. The previous details were entered into, in order that

the remarks upon his character might be more intelligible.

We have already observed upon the independence of conduct which characterized the career of Mr. Wilberforce, and from which he never departed. Now this very independence and disconnection from party exposed him while living to many aspersions from all parties. The same, in some degree, may be expected as regards the opinions which will be formed now of his qualifications as a statesman. The determined opponent of emancipation will condemn him for his conduct on this important question ; as will the anti-reformer for his opinions regarding reform. The democrat will class him with the oppressors of his country, because he supported penal enactments against sedition, severe, but in his judgment absolutely indispensable ; while the thorough favourer of Pitt's war policy will impugn his opposition on that question. But the person who desires to form a true estimate of his character will judge him not according as the great man's opinions coincide entirely with his own, but as his acts appear to spring from conscientious conviction, the offspring of deep thought.

The disposition of Wilberforce in favour of some parliamentary reform was manifested so early as 1785. He then speaks of the consequences of such a measure as—a restoration to freedom, and the “destruction of party connections.” In 1793, he continues steadfast to these opinions ; and that notwithstanding his hostility to the French principles to which the opponents of all reform considered reformers fast tending. The following

is his language :—"Considering the case of such persons as have actually imbibed the republican notions as altogether desperate ; and of consequence, though I would not for the sake of bringing them back by fair means deviate a hair's breadth from the line I should otherwise pursue, I look upon all moderate reformers, who are sincerely attached to our present constitution of Kings, Lords, and Commons, with a very different eye, and should think it right to pay regard to them. Unless some reform be made, though we should get through our present difficulties, they will recur hereafter with aggravated force." In 1809, we find him again supporting this opinion. "I was always," says he, when speaking on Mr. Curwen's motion for Parliamentary Reform, "a friend to moderate and temperate reform. In my younger days I espoused it : though older now, and consequently more cautious, I can see no reason to doubt the propriety of that former opinion, or why reform should not take place." In reply to some of his Yorkshire constituents, who not having seen a full report of his speech in support of Mr. Brand's motion for Parliamentary Reform, rather objected to his conduct on that occasion, he reiterates the same sentiments ; and while he repudiates the opinions of those who speak in disparaging terms of the constitution of Great Britain, he declares that it is his admiration of it, and his sense of its excellencies, that makes him wish a very moderate and temperate reform in the representative system. Considering representation as the vital principle of the House of Commons, he feared lest the continuance of some four or five boroughs, whose existence

seemed inconsistent with the representative system, should produce so strong an impression on the public mind hereafter, especially if heated, as to impel them to go to greater lengths than would be consistent with the safety of the British Constitution. How far the bill which ultimately became the law of the land verified these fears, will be decided according to each man's political bias. That any one may desire moderate reform in political or ecclesiastical matters is quite consistent with heartfelt attachment to the Church and Constitution. There were many secretly friends to temperate reform, who feared lest their avowal of such sentiments might expose them to the charge of unfaithfulness to the Constitution. To this class, Mr. Wilberforce did not belong. His conscientious conviction of the propriety of any measure was sufficient to induce the avowal of such conviction in his place in Parliament, even to the sacrifice, as we have seen, of present popularity. While, doubtless, he valued popularity justly earned, he knew its evanescent nature; and was unconsciously achieving a monument more durable than brass, while he was uninfluenced by anything save love of country in subservience to that greater love which is demanded by the Giver of all good.

There is another subject on which Wilberforce entertained opinions at variance with those supposed to belong to persons of evangelical sentiments in religion, and to this we now direct attention. The subject alluded to is generally termed Catholic Emancipation; meaning, in fact, the removal from those professing the Roman Catholic religion of the disabilities which prevented them from taking their seats in the Houses of

Parliament as hereditary or elected representatives. It is clear that Roman Catholic emancipation was a subject which caused Wilberforce much anxiety. He sought to become acquainted with the arguments on both sides of the question; and the words, "Lord direct me," which we find in one of his papers in connection with this subject, show how earnestly he strove to be right in his decision. The reasons which induced him to incline towards the admission of Roman Catholics into Parliament were somewhat different from those of the generality of its advocates. No man could be more fully convinced of the errors of that system to which they who sought admission into the Senate belonged. He had too much experimental acquaintance with the Bible not to know how diametrically opposed to the Divine teaching is that corrupt system in all its parts. He knew how Rome had exercised her power in past ages to persecute the righteous; yet withal he was in favour of Roman Catholic Emancipation. His reason for arriving at this conclusion was founded upon the fact that the elective franchise was already granted. In his speech on Grattan's motion, in 1813, he said, "You have given them already political power,—it is vain therefore to try to stop where you now are: but the present is a golden opportunity in which you may accompany this concession with the necessary safeguards; for even if the consciences of Roman Catholics should not be bound by the oath which they will take, where can gentlemen be found who, after swearing not to disturb or endanger the Established Church, would dare to rise and propose any measure to its detriment?"

The soundness of this view, it must be admitted, has not been supported by subsequent experience. The grounds on which Wilberforce supported Roman Catholic Emancipation were, that having gone so far as to confer upon Roman Catholics the power of electing Members, it was impossible to stop there, and that a return to their exclusion from the franchise, or a permission for them to sit as Members of the Houses of Parliament, must be the alternatives. He considered the Protestant cause in as much danger from the nominal Protestants whom Roman Catholic electors sent to represent them, as from the openly professing members of their own church. But though he supported the measure called Catholic Emancipation, he could not go the length of endowing such a system as the Romish. When speaking on the subject of a grant to Maynooth College, he emphatically declared his conviction that Popery was the true bane of Ireland, and that it was nothing less than infatuation to take any steps for its encouragement. In a letter to Mr. Hey (April 2, 1807), he writes, "A vote for the doubling the foundation of Maynooth College, which passed a few weeks ago, so as to send out four hundred Roman Catholic priests every four years, is the most pernicious measure in my judgment which has been assented to for many years!" It is remarkable, too, that he then looked to the conversion of the Irish to the true faith, as the grand panacea for the evils in Ireland. "Our great endeavour ought to be," he writes, "to convert the Roman Catholics; much I verily believe might be done in that way in twenty or thirty years." How he would have

rejoiced if he now lived, to see the glorious work which God is carrying on by the instrumentality of the Irish Church Missions.

The favourable disposition of Mr. Wilberforce towards Roman Catholic Emancipation may after all have been partly due to that love of toleration which was so conspicuous in his character—toleration towards those who differed from him in religion. This feeling is, unhappily, too often coupled with spiritual lifelessness, and accompanies latitudinarianism; but such was not the cause of Wilberforce's tolerant disposition. He felt the reality of religion, and refused to compromise a single iota of it, as is manifest throughout his whole history; but he loved the piety which springs up in the heart under the influence of the Spirit, and shrank from anything which bordered on compulsion in religion. The toleration we speak of was freely accorded to Non-conformists, to whom he entertained no antipathy, but was happy if they were made instrumental in forwarding the cause of truth; while he preserved an unflinching attachment to the Church established in this land, and was the last to countenance disorderly proceedings within its pale. The anxiety of Wilberforce that full toleration should be afforded to Dissenters is manifest in his conduct when Pitt was disposed to interfere with the regulation under which a licence to preach was granted on application before a magistrate, after payment of a specified fee. A Member of Parliament, also a magistrate, having been applied to in his official capacity for such a licence by a person whose ignorance and forwardness offended him, was disposed at first to refuse the application, but finding the law

was against him, exclaimed that the law should not thus continue. In furtherance of his views, he in some manner prevailed upon Pitt's Government to sanction a measure which would have infringed much upon the toleration then enjoyed by Dissenters. On hearing of the probable change in the law, Wilberforce lost no time in conferring with the Premier, and urging on him the necessity of relinquishing the proposed alteration. His opinion was that any infringement on the present liberty enjoyed must tend to serious consequences, and so far from benefiting, would injure the influence of the Established Church. The measure contemplated was happily allowed to drop; and the subject was lost sight of until 1811, when Lord Sidmouth revived it, with more trying restrictions. Wilberforce was again at his post, and pointed out to the then Premier, Mr. Perceval, the dangers which must almost certainly result. The Bill was negatived without a division, with the expressed concurrence of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Yet, notwithstanding the efforts of Wilberforce in favour of religious toleration, a report gained ground that he was the adviser of Lord Sidmouth in his measures. Speaking of this calumny, he says, "I am hurt by this story, because it tends to disparage religion;" and in allusion to it, he adds, "God, knowing me to be fond of popular favour, means thus graciously to mortify the passion." The cloud, however, which hovered over him in connection with this subject passed away. In the following year he received a vote of thanks from the Methodist Body for his principles of religious toleration.

In glancing over the parliamentary career of such a man as Wilberforce, we naturally look for his name in connection with measures which indicate his regard for the spiritual condition of his fellow-creatures, and we are not disappointed. In 1793, we find him taking advantage of the opening afforded him by the application on behalf of the East India Company for the renewal of their Charter, and endeavouring to improve the spiritual and moral condition of His Majesty's subjects in Asia. After a careful and diligent study of the question with the Archbishop of Canterbury, and others equally interested, he succeeded in having resolutions passed, pledging the House to the peculiar and bounden duty of promoting by all just and prudent means, the religious improvement of the native Indians. Two days after, he proposed specific resolutions for sending schoolmasters and chaplains throughout India. To those accustomed to the present state of feeling on such a subject, an effort like that just mentioned may seem comparatively easy: but when we consider the indifference on religious subjects which generally prevailed, especially as regards those in distant lands; when we remember that many who had worldly interests at stake in India feared lest any attempt to instruct the natives might lead to the injury of their property, we shall better estimate the successful attempt. Speaking of the Indian resolutions and slave abolition business, he adds, "Lord Carhampton abusing me as a madman." Again we find him, even when most interested in the abolition question, and also watching eagerly for every opening for peace propositions which might occur, supporting a Bill

introduced by Mr. Maynwaring for a stricter observance of the Lord's day. Once more he appears zealous for the Lord of Hosts, contending against the desecration of that holy day by devoting a portion of it to the exercises and drilling of the army. Writing to Hannah More on this subject, he says, "You must think, who both know and believe the Bible, this insult to the majesty and protection of God is likely to draw down His vengeance on us." The alteration of the market-day at Smithfield, from Monday, also engaged his attention, and he attended the Committee, though the heat of the room was injurious to his health. Whatever measure tended to forward the interests of religion and morality was sure to have his ardent support, by whomsoever originated: and there was this peculiarity in his character, that no feeling of jealousy ever made him anxious to be the originator of any useful measure; so that it was carried, he desired not that the smallest portion of praise should be reflected on himself. It is seldom that we witness such single-mindedness: self was lost, in his eager desire to do good.

When we consider the lax views on sacred subjects which prevailed in the House of which he was a member, how distasteful serious subjects were always to most of his fellow legislators, we can the better appreciate the estimation in which such a man was held. Had he been deficient in judgment, had he manifested inconsistency in conduct, we may conjecture how many would have been ready to take advantage of his weakness; but so sound was his judgment on all questions before the House, so convincing his arguments,

so arousing his unaffected eloquence, that even those who opposed the measure could not but admire and respect the man. We have a striking proof of the estimation in which he was held in the remarks of Sir J. C. Hipsley, and the Reverend Sidney Smith, when anxious to gain his support on the Maynooth Endowment question, in 1807. The former wrote, "You have the power to do more than any man in the kingdom." The latter, "There is no man in England, who, from activity, understanding, character, and neutrality, could do it so effectually as Mr. Wilberforce." But perhaps the strongest testimony to his public character is that rendered by the celebrated orator, Richard Brinsley Sheridan. When Mr. Wilberforce announced his intention of vacating his seat for Yorkshire, the former was under the impression he was about to give up parliamentary life altogether. Soon after he had exchanged his seat for Bramber, Sheridan met him, and when they had exchanged salutations, remarked, "Do you know I was near writing to you some little time ago?" On being asked why; he replied, "I read in the newspapers your farewell address to the freeholders of Yorkshire; and though you and I have not much agreed in our votes in the House of Commons, yet I thought the independent part you acted would render your retirement a public loss. I was about, therefore to write to you, to enforce on you the propriety of reconsidering your determination to retire, as I supposed, from public life, when I was informed that you were to come into Parliament for Bramber. This information made me lay aside my intention." Such testimony needs little comment; it proves demon-

stratively that religion and uprightness command the respect even of those whose practice hardly warrants us in saying they have acted themselves under the influence of either.

In forming our estimate of Mr. Wilberforce's statesmanship, we should not be justified in neglecting to weigh such testimony as the foregoing. The possession of principle would not alone have sufficed to draw forth such encomiums on his value as a member of the Imperial Legislature. It was principle indeed, with the firmest foundation—even, heartfelt Christianity—which influenced his conduct as a senator; but he possessed the rare qualification of sober yet keen perception of a subject, and the opinions he formed were the result of a process to which few public men perhaps subject the measures they support or reject. He could patiently examine the arguments on both sides of any question, and his conclusion was not the offspring of preconception, though such preconception was often confirmed by the inquiry.

Whatever, then, may be our private opinion on the subject of Roman Catholic Emancipation, we can hardly consider lightly the decision of such a man as Wilberforce; and if the effects of the measure have not been what some of its sanguine advocates anticipated, we are not warranted in placing the subject of this article among them. It was the impossibility of retracing our steps on the elective franchise which made him conclude we must take one more step in advance, while it seems, from observations he made, that he would not in the first instance have been an

advocate for granting to Roman Catholics the elective franchise at all.

As a statesman, we think, Wilberforce must take a high place ; furnishing a bright example of one who, while making every act he supported stand the test of religion, did not hesitate, when his judgment prompted him, to take part on the opposite side from men whose religious sentiments more nearly resembled his own than those of the party with whom he seemed to be agreeing. Such courage is rarely found as that which enables one to do his duty as a public character, when by so doing he separates himself for the time, as a man, from the favour of all parties.

To trace the history of Wilberforce as a philanthropist is to follow him step by step through his life. His was essentially a disposition that prompted him to act as a lover of his fellow-creatures ; while his deep religious convictions directed his efforts not only to their temporal but to their spiritual condition. The grand philanthropic object with which the name of this great man is and will ever be linked in the page of history, presents in its accomplishment a proof what obstacles can be overcome by the untiring efforts of one whose motives spring from a pure source, and whose activity is in proportion to his unselfishness. We cannot read the history of the efforts in behalf of the enslaved, without feeling thankful that the noblest intellects of our land were enlisted in the cause of freedom, while we are disposed to wonder that such efforts should so long have been made in vain. That the eloquence of Burke, Fox, Pitt and

Wilberforce should have thundered against the bondage of the African, and yet his chains cleave to him year after year : that the voices of three out of the four should have been silent in the grave ere the measure which justice and humanity, but still more Christianity, demanded, had become the law of the land : yet, such was the case ; session after session passed, and the Abolition of the Slave Trade seemed almost as distant as ever.

That such a sight could have been witnessed little more than half a century since, as a ship lying in the Thames fitted for a cargo of our fellow-creatures, seems almost incredible : but we know it is true ; and that the humane considered they had gained a point when a measure was enacted providing more room on board ship for the miserable passengers who were destined to be made merchandise of in another clime. To us, who live in a more humane age, such things seem strange ; but we should never forget the men to whose exertions, humanly speaking, we are indebted, for the change,—and especially him, who seemed as it were set apart for this noble work.

It is difficult to say with certainty who first aroused attention to the infamous traffic, which had become an ordinary and respectable employment in the eyes of many. Mr. Ramsay, who had opportunities of personally becoming acquainted with the sufferings of the negroes, when residing in the West Indian Islands, excited indignation by the harrowing tales he related ; and Thomas Clarkson published, at a later period, his “ Essay on the Slave Trade ;” but to Wilberforce belongs the honour of being instrumental

in the accomplishment of the glorious object—the abolition of the infamous traffic. The difficulties which stood in the way of the great design were more numerous than many ardent friends of the cause anticipated. At the very commencement of the struggle the great leader was attacked with a dangerous illness, and the chief anxiety upon his mind at this time seems to have been his fear lest the attempt to abolish the Slave Trade should be relinquished at his death. It pleased Providence, however, to raise him up; and from this time his whole energies were more or less given up to the grand object. Space will not permit of our enumerating the various obstacles which presented themselves in the way of success. At one time the measure seemed about to pass; but some delay was interposed, which postponed the further consideration. Again the breaking up of an Administration produced a similar effect. The fact of revolutionary France having sanctioned the manumission of slaves was enough to damp the zeal of quondam Abolitionists. Nothing daunted, the Apostle of Freedom persisted in his efforts, never allowing his attention to be turned aside to other objects so as to forget that this was the chief one; bearing patiently his defeats from time to time, until at length success was vouchsafed him by the Most High; and in February, 1807, he was almost overwhelmed by the acclamations of the members of that House in which he had often sustained defeat, and exclaimed, in grateful admiration, “How wonderful are the ways of God!”

In reading the history of Wilberforce's life during the period between his first struggle on behalf of abo-

lition and his success, we know not whether most to praise his patience or ability. While zealous to a remarkable degree in the cause he advocated, he was never betrayed into the common fault of the enthusiast, rashness. He foresaw difficulties, and endeavoured to provide against them; defeat, even where victory had been expected, so far from dispiriting, served only to quicken his endeavours. He fortified himself with facts, never hazarding an assertion which he was incapable of proving. In short, he possessed all the energy of the enthusiastic without their defects; his zeal and discretion were balanced. While, then, we ascribe the accomplishment of the great object of his life to the Hand that directs human affairs, we must recognise unbounded wisdom in the selection of an instrument so well qualified in every way for the task.

The Abolition of the Slave Trade, although chiefly accomplished by one whose motives were dictated by heartfelt religion, numbered among its supporters many who would not have pretended to act on similar feelings. While, then, we remember Wilberforce as a philanthropist in connection with his abolition efforts, we must not forget his claims to philanthropy connected with religion alone. We allude particularly to his work on "Practical Christianity." There is an impression on many minds that efforts in religious movements belong exclusively to those who have been set apart to the sacred office, and the impression is sometimes fostered by the persons thus set apart; yet this is surely a great mistake. That there are duties which attach to the clergy exclusively, all admit; but this by no means implies that the laity have no work to do in the

advancement of the cause of religion ; on the contrary, there is work which they can perform with greater effect than those who fill the sacred office. The fact that interested motives cannot be attributed to them as is sometimes done, however unjustly, regarding the clergy, gives them an influence of a peculiar kind. Hence it seems much to be desired that the laity were more alive to their duties in the cause of religion. When we remember Wilberforce as the champion of the negro, we must not forget him as the defender of Gospel truth in our own land, and his book on the Slave Trade should stand side by side with his "Practical Christianity."

Among the reasons for publishing the latter valuable treatise, there is one which shows the character of the author's mind. He felt that it was the duty of a Christian not to be "ashamed of the gospel of Christ ;" yet he felt also the difficulty of gaining opportunities for the display of his deep belief in the truths of that gospel. By publishing such a book, this object was in a measure attained. His sentiments upon religion were openly avowed ; and the character of his belief could not be unintentionally misrepresented, when a reference might at any time be made to a work where that character is described. The merits of a book which has received the commendations of so many remarkable for piety and erudition need not be discussed here : the benefits resulting to numerous individuals, as communicated to the writer of it, were acknowledged by him with gratitude to the Giver of Life. When, then, we speak of the philanthropist who fought the battle of the enslaved negro

so long, we must not lose sight of the writer of a work which was made instrumental in gaining for many that freedom of which it is written, that he who hath it is "free indeed." We should expect that one possessing the experimental acquaintance with Christianity displayed in the work above-named, would be anxious concerning the spiritual condition not only of those in his own country, but of the numbers "perishing for lack of knowledge" in heathen lands; and we meet with the following entry in his diary of November 9, 1797: "Dined and slept at Battersea Rise, for Missionary Meeting—Simeon, Charles Grant, Venn—something, but not much, done—Simeon in earnest!" This was the embryo of the Society which issued, in 1800, in the Church Missionary Society for Africa and the East, and has continued to extend its influence ever since. The same heart which could beat for the enslaved, physically and spiritually, could also feel for those unable to procure that Book from which he himself derived all his consolation; and hence, in 1803, we find him diligent in the work of forming a Society, the benefits of which to the world at large can hardly be over estimated, and which so lately kept its jubilee—the British and Foreign Bible Society; "A Society, the catholic aspect of which (we are told by his biographers) delighted his large and liberal mind."

If we follow the Christian philanthropist and statesman within the sanctuary of home we find the same influence which directed his public life at work there. Mr. Wilberforce married, in 1797, at the age of thirty-six, and was blessed with a family of sons and daughters. The affectionate disposition

which attracted so many in his boyhood, was fully developed in his domestic relationship of husband and father ; and in his parental discipline, force was the exception and affection the rule. In the earlier part of his married life he was unable to bestow that attention to the education of his children of which he so much felt the need : his public duties demanded nearly all his time, and this was one of the reasons which induced him to relinquish his seat for Yorkshire before the termination of his parliamentary career, and to accept a position greatly inferior,—that of member for the borough of Bramber. He felt that there were duties of a domestic character which even public calls did not authorize a parent altogether to dispense with. How often have the children of the eminently religious, both among the clergy and laity, suffered from the want of that important superintendence which constantly recurring public demands upon their time have obliged their fathers to omit.

The latter years of the great philanthropist's life were spent in the bosom of his family. He had passed a long and eventful one. He had seen many of his illustrious friends numbered with the dead. He had been permitted to behold the accomplishment of the great object of his life. He had won the esteem even of those who were opposed to him in that grand object, counting among his friends many whose worldly interests had suffered from its success.

William Wilberforce entered into rest on Monday, July 29, 1833, at the advanced age of nearly seventy-four years. His mortal remains repose in the northern transept of Westminster Abbey, close to the tombs of

Pitt, Fox, and Canning ; having been attended thither by princes of the blood and others of high rank in Church and State, whose presence attested but did not add to the greatness of his name.

Calm and peaceful was the end of one who had lived in troublous times,—prolonged the life of one whose delicacy in early years seemed to threaten premature departure from this terrestrial sphere. Great men were his contemporaries, yet he will bear comparison with any among them. Eloquent lips had enchained hearers during his long career, yet none ever turned the gift of eloquence to a more holy account. Many able ministers of Christ fulfilled their sacred office within, while he discharged his no less solemn duties without the sanctuary. None ever served more faithfully their Lord and Master.

While, then, we are alive to the benefits conferred upon mankind by the efforts of a Newton, a Scott, a Venn, and a Simeon, at a period when the flame of spiritual religion was growing faint, we can never forget the services of him who consecrated his talents as a statesman to the support of the noblest of causes,—the emancipation of his enslaved fellow-men ; and yet, amid the numerous engagements connected with his public life, could find time to produce a work which maintains the supremacy of Gospel truth,—that truth which he so long made the standard of his life and practice.



EDWARD BICKERSTETH.

BORN, MARCH 16, 1786.

DIED, FEB. 28, 1850.

"WHAT art thou now ? Methinks for thee
Heaven brightens round its King ;
New beams of the Divinity,
New-landed spirits bring,
As God on each his image seals,
And ray by ray himself reveals."

A little before nine o'clock in the morning may be seen, six days in the week, streams of London young men pouring into the city to their desks, counters, offices, and warehouses. Little more than fifty years ago might have been seen a sallow, ungainly-looking

youth, fourteen or fifteen years old, finding his way to the old Post-office, in Lombard-street : you would easily detect by his walk, and whole appearance, that he was not born within the sound of Bow bells. He was not the worse for that. He had an elder brother in the Dead Letter Office, and his father, a surgeon in Westmoreland, with a large family, thought his younger son, Edward, might as well leave school, and earn his own living by coming to London, and accepting an opening in the same office. His education, consequently, was cut short at fourteen ; he left the grammar-school at Kirby Lonsdale, and was thrown, just as many are, among the temptations of this great city. His father was a man of the strictest integrity, and great cheerfulness ; his mother, a person of uncommon decision of character ; she was never known to be idle ; she kept a little bag of work by her side, and even at meals, if she had done first, her hands were busy while she joined in conversation. One of her parting admonitions to her son Edward he never forgot, and is worth your remembering : " Be sure you never eat the bread of idleness." It could not be said that either father or mother was a person of spiritual religion ; indeed, the father had no scruple about a game at cards, and his mother saw no objection in going to a ball ; nor did they prevent such things in their children, if they inclined that way. I do not imagine that there was anything very attractive about this young post-office clerk any way. His manners were awkward, so that, much as he disliked it, he even yielded to his mother's request that he would try to improve himself by taking lessons in dancing. His

associates soon found he was not very obliging: he was rather reserved and cold in his manner,—fond of his own way, and it was not easy to move him; so that I do not suppose the Post-office clerks reckoned young Bickersteth any great favourite among them.

Now change your view—let fifty years pass away. Imagine yourselves in the spacious rectory of Watton, in Herts—with its well-stored, noble library—its lawn and gardens, standing on a slope off the road-side, and adjoining a good-looking old Church, the squire's mansion with its domains, and the quiet village with its schools and cottages. Enter the dwelling—go upstairs;—you find a family of sons and daughters gathered mournfully together. You soon discover you have entered the chamber of a dying man. Inquiries from every quarter, and shoals of letters full of sympathy, bespeak this illness is a matter of public interest. After no long illness, nature gives way: seasons of unconscious torpor are relieved by bright gleams of intelligence, and hopes of intense delight; but, at length, his spirit leaves the body. His family, his parish, the entire Church at home, the Church abroad, feel in his removal they have suffered a heavy loss. Large numbers of parishioners and neighbouring clergy attend his funeral. Deputations from the Church Missionary Society, Jews, Foreign Aid, Evangelical Alliance, Irish Church Missions, are there to testify the grief which thousands felt for his removal. And yet there was a feeling of deep joy thrown over that sad scene. It was sorrow, indeed—genuine, heart sorrow—that drew tears from many an eye that but seldom weeps; but as they bore his

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coffin in at the gateway of the Church, through rows of his parishioners,—they felt it was almost wrong to grieve. His was a race so well run,—labours so well finished,—a fight so long and nobly fought,—that they almost forgot their sorrow, in the certain assurance that he was then full of joy, in the presence of his heavenly Master. Sermons on the occasion of his death were preached in many churches throughout this country ; yea, and congregations in Africa listened with tears to preachers who detailed the labours, character, and death of one who had once trodden their mission-ground ; and testimony to his holy character and abundant labours was gratefully inscribed among the records of many of the great religious societies, in which they mention his invaluable services, his matured Christian character, his holy fervour and single-hearted devotedness to the cause of God throughout the world, and the unusually large measure of public affection which he had long enjoyed.

Now, we say, put these things together ; call back to mind the lank, raw, Westmoreland youth, sorting his heaps of returned letters in the Dead-letter Office, with not much learning in him, and no piety in his heart ; no friend in London, but his brother John ; hardly an acquaintance that cared for his company,—see that raw youth, at the end of fifty years, grown into the man ;—yes ! and such a man ! So energetic, that the cause of God throughout the world felt the vibrations of his zeal ; so warm and diffusive in his love, that he seemed to combine the pious and benevolent of every name and every country within his comprehensive embrace ;

so thoroughly good, that men of all characters are constrained to do homage to his unquestionable piety. To inquire, then, how it was, that that selfish and ungainly lad, coming up to London without money, without patronage, became one of the most loving of Christians—the most self-denying of labourers—one of the most successful pastors in the fold of Christ; to trace, step by step, how this marvellous transformation came about, and to see if we cannot in some way or other tread in his steps,—this is our purpose in reviewing his life and character. We need hardly tell you that we have no materials out of which to shape the lessons which we desire to convey, except such as the printed memoir by his son-in-law supplies. We do not aim to give such a sketch of his life as may dispense with the perusal of that interesting memoir, but only to dig a few channels in which the thoughts may flow when studying his instructive biography more at large.

It is proposed to consider—

I. The outward circumstances in which we see him as life goes on.

II. The main elements of his character.

III. The means by which that character was formed, sustained, and matured.

If some men were to give a sketch of their outward life, how many ups and downs would come to light—plans frustrated, and beginnings of things abruptly broken off, bright openings, in time wrapped in gloom and ending in disappointment; so that, instead of making way, they find themselves struggling all

through life against a headwind, feeble, ineffective, and complaining men,—looking upon everything on the dark side, and thinking that there can be no prosperity for any one, because they have succeeded so badly themselves.

Now, the character before us may teach you better things. Here is a youth come up to London from the hills of Westmoreland, who, step by step, without any more help than any one of you may command, without anything extraordinary about him, except the extraordinary blessing of God, whom he learned to serve with a true and grateful heart, and yet rose from obscurity and selfishness to be so eminent even among good men, that we think it worth our while to spend some pains in inquiring how it was.

First, we find he was clerk in the Dead Letter Office ; he had lodgings somewhere with his brother John—a steady, attentive, thoughtful, confidential youth, doubtless he was. He had learned some good lessons at home about the value of money. He wrote down on paper how his quarter's salary was to be disposed of. First,—board, lodging, and clothes to be paid ; then one pound set aside towards paying for his annual journey home ; ten shillings to be laid by ; for his father taught him always to live within his income ; seven shillings to buy books ; seven shillings for amusements. Soon after I find he devoted half his amusement-money to be given away in charity. Had the Young Men's Society been founded then, we should think he was the sort of man to come and join it. However, while at the Post-office, Bonaparte's threatened invasion kindled people's patriotism, and our young

friend enrolled his name among the volunteers, and writes home, with much glee, to tell them what a brave soldier he is grown. He continued four years, redirecting money-letters to the persons who sent them without any direction,—an employment not very improving to an active-minded young man. He did not quite relish just directing other people's letters all his life long; he soon felt it to be drudgery, and wanted another kind of employment, which would lead him on to something better at last. His Post-office work was from ten to three: he had no idea of lounging about in an evening, squandering his money and smoking cigars and associating with questionable companions. No, there was something solid,—calculating,—elastic, about this Westmoreland youth. He wrote home, that besides his five hours he could easily add eight hours more to his day's work—thirteen hours a-day did not frighten him. No sooner said than done! Accordingly we find him walking off from the Post-office to a solicitor's office, where he spends his evenings in the hard writing of a lawyer's clerk. This was one move forward. His next idea was to get himself articulated; but here again he was too right-minded to make any demand upon his father to pay the premium. He seems to have laid it down that "get on he must," but the instruments to be trusted to must be his *own head and his own hands*. He asked his father about this time if there was not some opening for him in the West Indies, where he might sooner become independent, and then come back and make himself serviceable. He had no notion of asking another to help him, if it was within the limit of possibility to help himself; so that in course of time

he arranges with his master that he will remain so long beyond his proper term of years, giving his services as managing clerk, in lieu of premium, only letting his father pay his hard cash down for the stamp. Now there is something noble in that, and worthy of being recollected. A young man that has such a spirit as that in him, is not unlikely to do something another day. All this was training him to that energy, self-denial, and forethought, which afterwards he employed to such advantage to the whole Church of God.

"I cannot find many clerks," said his master, "like Mr. Bickersteth; he does the work of three or four." Indeed, from nine till nine you see him hard at work: at other hours he is reading law—chancery and common-law, too. He speaks at one time of having twenty-seven causes to manage; and after that, he says he is half distracted with the multitude of business, having then about eighty causes to attend to. Only think of that! What a scene of preparation for coming usefulness.

While working in this solicitor's office, one soon sees that a change of the most spiritual and decided kind is gradually taking place. We defer entering upon that just now. But, while devoting his hours and his energies to his professional duties, his heart is evidently set upon heavenly things. Still, I would have you observe, that he was too conscientious, too sound-hearted in religion, to allow himself, on that score, to grow negligent in his master's business. He kept the things of Cæsar and the things of God each in their right places. That was a noble testimony which his master bore: "I never had a clerk who got through

so much business as Mr. Bickersteth, nor one whose heart seemed so little in it." What is that but "using the world, not abusing it?"

One is not surprised to find that long before his articles were expired, his mind turned towards the Christian ministry, as more congenial employment. Still, the way seemed hedged up, and this led him to cherish the spirit of patient submission to the will of God,—the calm resignation of all his plans and desires into the hand of God—the simple waiting for the Lord's will, which afterwards marked his character all through life. His father, who could not then appreciate his son's Christian character, attributed these desires to fickleness or discontent, and even his brother John did not encourage him. However, though these things never extinguished the desire, they taught him to wait with patience for some plainer indication of God's will.

His growing zeal for God then began to show itself in various schemes of Christian usefulness. In 1812, his engagements with his master being all honourably fulfilled, he leaves London to settle as a solicitor in Norwich, in partnership with a person whose sister he had just previously married. Still, though settled in a prosperous business, yielding him an ample income, and his domestic relationships all tending to make him satisfied to go on as a solicitor, we find him at Norwich coming out more and more distinctly as a man in whose converted soul the things of God had gained a strong preponderance. One thing which he soon set his heart upon was to form a Church Missionary Association in Norwich. The good people at Norwich were

full of fears about such a step, and hung back. "Well," said he, with holy determination, when he saw his friends giving way, "a Church Missionary Association there shall be in Norwich, if I stand alone to proclaim it, and my wife shall be secretary." This carried the point. A noble meeting was held, and one thousand pounds added to the funds, were the result. Since then, every year, Norwich has seen its Church Missionary meeting. This was soon followed by the Jews' Society. He had also attended a Bible Society meeting at Norwich. It seems that even from the beginning his speeches were marked by that instructive fulness which made him always so profitable a speaker at the various meetings. The eminent Quaker, J. J. Gurney, attended that Bible meeting at Norwich, and concluded his speech by saying, "Now, friend Bickersteth, they have got new Bibles, thou must tell them how to use them." Mr. Bickersteth then gave a simple, practical exhortation about the right use of the Scriptures, to the meeting. "Now, friend," said Mr. Gurney, after Mr. Bickersteth sat down, "thou must put that into a little book, that they may have it to read again." This hint led him to publish a little pamphlet, as a help to study the Scriptures, which was his first attempt at authorship. That book was his "Scripture Help:" thousands of copies were published in this country, and translated into many continental languages.

After waiting with watchful eye and prayerful heart for God's direction, his way was made plain to receive ordination. He gave up a practice which yielded an income of eight hundred pounds a year. It is true that some were malicious enough to try to poison the Bishop's

mind against him as a terrible Methodist, but the Bishop spoke of him as a young man of genuine piety, considerable attainments, and moral character irreproachable; and added, that he much preferred Mr. Bickersteth's piety to a university education. In December, 1815, he was ordained. In the afternoon of the same day, he preached in one of the Norwich churches. The people of Norwich were full of interest about the event, and crowds went to the church, as they said, "to hear the lawyer preach." In the first week he preached several times, beginning that course of downright hard labour in winning souls to God which he was enabled to keep up with such uncommon success for thirty-five years.

From this time events of the most important character quickly follow each other. It had been proposed by Mr. Pratt, then Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, as one motive for his immediate ordination, that he should go at once to Africa, to inspect the state of the Mission at Sierra Leone.

Now, only think of this ! Here was a man, who, for ten years, had been fagging up-hill in all the gradations of an attorney's office ; first, just commencing to copy abstracts and engross deeds in the evening hours—then as articled clerk—then he is manager, overwhelmed with an immense practice, common law and chancery, proper and agency business,—then he joins an established partnership in Norwich ; and yet, such was the maturity of his Christian character,—his known standing as a faithful servant of God ; his judgment, wisdom, holy zeal ; his enlarged knowledge of Christian truth and duty, and of the nature of mission work,—that he is selected by the Church Missionary

Committee as the fittest person to undertake to inspect, and report upon the condition of the Mission in Western Africa. He goes, in fact, almost without any interval, from his lawyer's office, straight into the duties and responsibilities of the Christian ministry ; and undertakes, at the very outset, and accomplishes with singular wisdom and success a foreign duty, so full of difficulties that hundreds of men who have been years in the ministry would be afraid, or incompetent, to encounter. However, "assured by gathering that God called him" to go to Sierra Leone, nothing kept him back even from that. He could leave his wife—could face a barbarous people—could encounter a deadly climate—feeling it quite possible that he might die there. His duties there are full of difficulty ; requiring such wisdom, tenderness and discretion, such firmness and love, as few, even experienced, ministers possessed. His answer to the instructions of the Committee is wise and holy, and honouring to God. "Let me entreat you not to expect much. I may return having accomplished little. I may never reach Africa, or never return from it. Preparation for the disappointment of our plans is our duty. Should it be His will that I do not return, let none think that therefore it was wrong to go, or that I regretted having gone." He left London for this African labour in 1815—a fortnight after he had been ordained.

After spending about three months in Africa—during which he inspected the mission schools ; fully examined the condition of the whole missionary work ; preached the Gospel to the natives ; restored peace between brethren, and delivered his instructions to the

missionaries, full of wisdom, and love, and prudence—he set sail, returning homeward by way of the West Indies ; and, in the same year, again landed on his native shore, with his heart full of gratitude for the abounding goodness of a covenant-keeping God.

He had been carried through all this as a discipline for such extensive usefulness as few have been permitted to know. He had now seen Heathenism as it is—with his own eyes ; he knew its hideous abominations ; he felt his own soul yearning to see poor idolators rescued from the black tyranny of Hell, and to touch the hearts of others to come and help them ; that, henceforth, he was the very man to take the lead in conducting the great Missionary Establishment of the Church of this country. He continued to labour for about eight years, as Co-Secretary of the Church Missionary Society, with Mr. Pratt, until 1824, when Mr. Pratt resigned, and Mr. Bickersteth was appointed to succeed him. In this important post, conducting the affairs of that great Institution, he was travelling as its representative in all parts of the kingdom, preaching everywhere to crowded congregations, animating and informing multitudes of Christians at missionary meetings, awaking an interest in missions where none was felt before, extending and consolidating its operations, bringing to its committee his growing stores of wisdom and experience, and kindling its associations throughout the country with holy zeal, fed by knowledge of missionary work,—and always sustained by the heaven-derived principles of the Gospel of the grace of God. In this way did he spend six more years, exercising an influence upon the Church at

home, and upon missions in four quarters of the world, which few men, since the days of the Apostles have been permitted to acquire.

This brings his history down to 1830, when he became rector of Watton.

How many men, active and good men too, who after having spent ten years of hard fagging, among lawyers, law-courts, and law proceedings, and then had stood fourteen years more of the wear-and-tear of a London clergyman—with the interlude of a visit to one of the deadliest climates in the world—how many men, having gone through that, if a parish like Watton came in their way, would just have settled down there, like discharged veterans, and have spent the rest of their days in the peaceful duties of looking after a few sheep in the wilderness? But, no! that was not Edward Bickersteth. Released from his official duties, and removed from his desk in Salisbury-square to his library in Watton Rectory, he could look more upon the general condition of the Church of Christ, and spread his labours over a wider surface.

During the twenty years' residence at Watton, he seems to have relaxed no efforts,—abandoned no sphere of usefulness,—allowed himself no self-indulgences,—but continued the same unwearied labourer in the vineyard that he had been before. Journeys throughout England, Scotland, and Ireland, for the Church Missionary Society, were still continued. The Jews' Society he advocated in the same spirit; in the Bible Society he took an active part; when the City Mission was formed, its deep want was felt, and its progress promoted by him: to the Church Pastoral-Aid Society he

was a steady friend. Then, in 1832, came the Romanising movement,—outside the Church were Papists unmasked, all helping on the Pope, and inside the Church, Papists, disguised, were unbarring Protestant gates to let them all in. This portentous movement, which he thought indicated the latter days, awoke the sleepless vigilance of our friend at Watton. When the cholera came in 1832, and again in 1848, it was a tract of his that tended to give a right direction to the serious feelings of the nation. Of the Evangelical Alliance he was one of the main promoters; of Irish Church Missions, almost its parent; of Popery, one of the most unflinching antagonists,—he always seemed to hate Popery with a feeling of unearthly terror, as if he saw the whole system steaming direct from hell. This made him ever ready to throw into the Protestant movement all his soul, head, hands, lips. Some will not readily forget a lecture he delivered on this subject, nor the vast amount of information he gave on “Popery in the Colonies,” and his modest word, in acknowledging their thanks, that he was rather thankful to them for giving him an opportunity for relieving his mind of the vast mass of Popish and Anti-popish knowledge which had come to his hands.

He became, also, one of the most voluminous religious authors of the day. Fifteen distinct volumes issued from his pen, besides six volumes more of older writers adapted for present use. His correspondence brought him packets of letters from men of eminence and piety, of all shades of opinion, all forms of church government, and all quarters of the world. He was intimately beloved by Christians of every

name, and his presence was always grateful to Christian assemblies in every place. Soundly attached to the Church of England, whose doctrine and constitution he was ready to uphold, still he could gather Christians from every congregation to listen to his gospel discourses, and to co-operate in his open-hearted schemes for the good of man. Thus he rose, and laboured, and prayed, and spent his best strength in the service of the best of Masters. He was not eloquent, but earnest. He was not learned, but always eminently instructive. He never surprised you by the glitter of genius, but made you happy by the warmth of his love, and edified you by the spirituality of his mind. He never sought man's praise, but men, even good men, could not withhold it. In speaking, he always selected such points as would interest the people, and carry them along with him ; but it was that they might all be led together to Him, and to His cross—the believer's hope in this world, and his glory in the world to come.

Now, we think enough may have been said to show that these elements of downright excellence are found in Mr. Bickersteth. He was the sort of man, and he did the sort of things, of which every one might well say, "I wish I were such an one as he !" It will, then, be useful to inquire how it was that he became such. Some elements of his character were no doubt innate ; he brought them with him from Kirby Lonsdale ; they were in him, though almost dormant, when he was spending his five hours a day in redirecting dead letters, or when copying papers in an attorney's office. Some points of excellence he gained by the circumstances in which he was placed ; some he received as a direct and

gracious gift from Him who loved him, and marked him out to be a chosen vessel to Him, to bear His name to the Gentiles.

This, we think, is the pith and marrow of the subject. It is but a tame and useless story to tell the readers that once there was an awkward country lad, that in time grew up into so great an eminence, that at length he was carried to his honoured grave amidst the tears of thousands, and the sculptor and the historian come forward to perpetuate his name. The main thing is to point out distinctly, if we can, how it was, what were the constituent elements of his inward soul—his head, mind, heart—that worked themselves out, and made him the man he was.

This is the second inquiry ; How did he become the man he was ?

(1.) Negatively. He was marked by the absence of many of the destructive qualities which ruin young men, or at any rate which keep them ever floundering in the mire. I find no indications whatever in him, at any in the period, that he was ever getting any relish for the vices of your gay young men in London ; he kept himself from the paths of the destroyer. He had the same temptations that you have now ; he speaks of his companions in the lawyer's office,—“ I cannot help feeling a desire of better society. It is grievous to hear continual oaths and not to be able to check them, and obscene language is intolerable.” His soul was vexed with such like associates as well as yours. Still, we say, he never gave way to the contamination. Indolence he clearly never understood. Indefatigable labour he inherited from his mother ; nor was he of an unsettled turn of mind. It is true, he made some

changes, but they arose from progress, not fickleness ; they were steps in the same straight direction—they were changes made in working out his self-advancement, which was the law of his very nature ; first the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear. We see no imprudence about him—no absurdities ; he does not run his head against a post, as thousands of young men do !

He aimed to merit respect, and he gained it.* We do not suppose he ever gave his parents five minutes' distress of mind from the very moment he left their roof, when he was fourteen years old. He did not come to London protected by real religion in any way, and yet, when mixed up with London clerks, there is an integrity about him, a steadiness which we trust thousands will try to copy ; he walks in no counsel of the ungodly ; he stands not in the way of sinners ; he sits in no seat of the scorner. Nothing of the kind. He tolerates no bad associates—never neglects business, however hard or dull and distracting, or grumbles at his employers ; he never defiled his lips by venting passion with an oath, or other improprieties of language ; he indulges no base propensities, wanders into no paths of profligacy, yields his neck to no vile habits, reads no bad books, goes into no bad places, contracts no bad habits in dress, or amusements, or company ;

* "We know not the man in the present day to whom we should look as a more faultless model of Christian excellence. His virtues and piety were far above the worldly attainments of Christian men, and approached those of the saints of old. The list of names of men most honoured in the Church for their saintliness, would not be dishonoured by the name of E. Bickersteth being added to their number."—*English Review*, Oct. 1851.

he knew such things flatter the heart, waste time, incur expense, and lead from bad to worse. From such-like destructive things, the character of Mr. Bickersteth was, from his earliest youth, utterly free. We doubt not all this was many a time gratefully mentioned by him in prayer, among the preventing mercies of God.

(2.) Positively. We may mention as one striking feature of the man, his thorough out-and-out conscientiousness. From his entrance into the old Post-office, in Lombard-street, until he ended his honoured career in Watton Rectory, conscientiousness seems always to have been the great power that swayed his conduct. With him duty was law. Inclination—the opinion of others—doing as others do ; such things had no weight with him. All his life long, he was used to think and decide for himself—not to be led blindfold by others : What ought to be, shall be—was his motto. If he thought Norwich ought to have its Church Missionary Association, he would have one. If some of his half-decided friends thought the lawyer was getting too religious he let them think so, and went straight on, serving the Lord with all humility of mind. If his Evangelical brethren did not sympathize with his prophetic studies, their keeping aloof never deterred him from pursuing Scriptural truth which he felt profitable ; and he lived to see hundreds of the brethren inquiring into the signs of the times. He was actuated by conscientiousness, not by man's fear, or man's favour. He went to Irving's chapel to hear the tongues : he saw them to be all nonsense,—they made no impression on him. He thought the Evangelical Alliance good, and he joined it heartily. He thought a friend's secession from the

Church was not wise, or good, or needful, and it never shook him. He never flinched, for an instant, in his own sound attachment to the Church of England. In great things or small, conscience was his law. When he furnished his own lodging in some court in London, he did the painting with his own hands! There was conscientiousness in that. He longed for an arm-chair; but denied himself such needless luxury until his salary was greater! Here was conscience! He was very desirous to have a little dog for a companion, and to buy its food, he saved a penny a day by blacking his own shoes! He seems always actuated by conscientious forethought. Inclination bends to duty. His master, in New Inn, gave orders that no clerk should have any holiday until all the bills were made out. This, he foresaw, would take away his holiday altogether; still, he says, "I cannot blame my employer, for it is unreasonable that we should go off into the country, and leave him in town to do the work." As to his meals, he abridged his time, because of his example to the junior clerks. Conscience was his pole-star. We must confess, however, that he was not always invincible to the tempting display of an old book-stall; it was not uncommon to go without dinner that he might make some addition to his little library. Yet this book-buying, which, perhaps, was his ruling passion, illustrates his conscientious spirit. He says once, "Lost an hour this evening at a book-sale—never go again; it is waste of time." So again, as to dining out on Sundays. For some years he regularly dined on Sunday with some friend: he resolved to break this off; he thought it more profitable to spend his Sunday evening in his own room, on things relating to God. He afterwards

writes to his parents of the real delight he took in attending Mr. Pratt's ministry, and the quiet religious enjoyment he had on Sundays in his own room ; he was evidently, all through life, fond of being alone ; he found solitude needful, profitable, refreshing. He was conscientious in his rising : his room was not always ready for him early ; and he had stayed in bed ; he feels ashamed, and renounces such sloth. These are little things—but there is conscience in them. We give one further instance of the power of conscience in him, when he had just served his articles.

At the request of some friends he had often visited an aged relative of theirs : in a professional as well as religious point of view, his visits were greatly valued. After this person's death, the relations, feeling the great value of his services, in many ways, placed in his hand a cheque for a sum of money. Without looking at the sum, he declined it at once. They urged his acceptance so strongly that he consented to receive it ; but when he saw it was a cheque for £200, he became quite uneasy. He consulted Mr. Budd, what to do : who observed, that he might properly regard it as a providential gift ; that he was soon going to be married, and such help would be useful. Still, however, Mr. Bickersteth did all he could to have the sum made less ; which was as strongly refused. He accepted it, at length, as a token of the Lord's goodness to him ; and gladly dedicated £20 of it, as a thank-offering for the relief of the poor and distressed. Indeed, we find among his seven resolutions which he formed on being articulated, this is laid down, which he seems to have acted upon with admirable fidelity : "Never to do a dishonourable or

dishonest thing, whether it be to gain £1,000, or a penny, whether it be to please my dearest friend, my superior, my equal, my inferior, or my greatest enemy."

(3.) Another element of his mind, which tended to give form to his external life, was the honour he paid to his parents. After he comes up to London, he was more than 200 miles, real, tough miles, away from them. We suppose every letter from home, at that time, cost him at least 1s. (probably more than the price of his dinner); and a stage-coach journey to Westmoreland was then no trifle; and yet, we hardly find a step he takes during his parents' lifetime, but the matter is laid respectfully before them as his advisers, and their approbation sought. We are not so sure that this is the conscientious practice of young men now. It may be feared that, to many, London is the "far country," where the young man mentioned in the Scriptures contrived to forget his father, and to waste his goods. But, from the outset of his London life, our young Westmoreland friend seems never to have lost sight of that text, "Honour thy father and mother;" which is the first commandment with promise, "that it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest live long on the earth." And he did honour his father and mother. He was ever dutiful in action, respectful in address, obedient to their directions, grateful for their kindness, tenderly considerate as to their spiritual interest and temporal comforts. As his mind opened to see eternal things, long and elaborate letters were thoughtfully prepared, urging upon his parents the great claims of Gospel truth, to which he feared they were not suffi-

ciently alive. His filial conduct is a perfect example, instructive in the highest degree, for young men. In his mind, the parental character was invested with a sacredness—a deep-felt reverence—a sense of indescribable obligation, which appeared, in lovely forms, throughout all his filial demeanour. His name must be mentioned as one of the best of sons. And did God's promise, which is given to such filial piety, fail? Was it not "well with him?" When, at length, he had reason to believe that both his parents died in the genuine faith of the Lord Jesus,—and other branches of his family too, and that he had been permitted to contribute to such a result,—was it not well with him? When his own laborious schemes of self-advancement in life all prospered so wonderfully, that he rose, by his own independent exertions, from being an evening clerk, at low wages, in a law-office, step by step, until he has a practice yielding him an ample professional income,—was it not well with him? When, moreover, the way was made plain for his ordination—the established desire of his heart thus realised; and there again God prospered him so wonderfully, in his mission to Africa—in his secretaryship of the Church Missionary Society—in his ministry at Wheler chapel—in the universal acceptance with which he was welcomed at meetings and churches without number, in England, Scotland, and Ireland,—was it not well with him? In the remarkable blessing which seems to rest upon his own children, whom he always speaks of as a source of unspeakable comfort to him; the books he wrote; the flock he tended at Watton; the part he took in all the great religious movements of his event-

ful day ; in the universal esteem with which he was venerated in life, and the unfeigned lamentation with which good men of every creed, and every country, wept over his honoured grave !—think, reader, of all these things, and then say, is not God's promise true to them who honour their father and mother, that "it shall be well with them, and they shall live long upon the earth?"

(4). But we must speak upon that which, after all, was the governing principle of his heart and life,—his personal piety. We would fain lay down the pen, and decline to touch a subject so sacred and so true, as the piety of Edward Bickersteth. It reminds one of a painter, who was employed to portray a family group ; but when he came to paint the venerable father, his heart failed him, and he drew him with his countenance just hidden by a curtain, leaving it to the spectator's mind to supply what he felt himself unable to describe. And yet, could we evoke the spirit of our sainted friend, and inquire whether we should touch that holy chord, though with unequal hand, we are sure his instantaneous reply would be : "Tell them—tell them, above all, what He whom I loved to serve, has done so graciously for my own soul."

We cannot discern any particular occasion when the Spirit of God first begun to work in his heart. When he was twenty-two he wrote a review of his life, for the purpose of humbling himself before God for the sins of childhood and youth. It begins, "I have lived twenty-two years—two hundred thousand hours ; twelve millions of minutes—and for my employment of every one of these minutes I am accountable to

God. In every minute it was my bounden duty to love God with all my heart and strength. What a mountain of iniquity does this discover! Very early I had religious impressions. When seven or eight, I recollect praying three times a day; but religious exercises were all irksome. About thirteen, had some serious thoughts, made some reformations, and thought myself very good. In 1801, came to London, careless about true religion; placed by good providence of God with a religious brother. Had I been left to myself, or been amongst irreligious companions, I should, in all probability, have become thoroughly worldly and abandoned. Even as it was, I never look back on that part of my life without self-abhorrence, regret, and abasement. Duties cold, formal—from fear, and, as meritorious; private prayer short and ineffectual; Sundays spent in excursions; no attention to sermons; seldom read my Bible; formed rules of reformation, and thought I had only to do this, and I should quite succeed. I had no idea of the necessity of a Saviour, or the nature of the Gospel. In 1803, resolved to attend church twice, if possible, and behave religiously; say Lord's prayer morning and evening; read chapter, morning and evening; sacrament four times a year; half an hour a day to religious duties." Even this, feeble, and ignorant, and self-righteous as it was, declined; he fell back and forgot God. But God graciously remembered him, and suffered him not to perish.

Three years after, his impressions revive. He says expressly, "I do not recollect what gave me more serious impressions of religion." But from the time that

he was articulated, in 1806, there were evident signs of the great work of Divine grace upon his soul, the power of which showed itself in a life of extraordinary devotedness to God; and the results he now enjoys in another world. At that time he evidently grew rapidly in spiritual things. His reflections from his twentieth year testify the clearness of doctrinal views; the thorough exaltation of Christ Jesus as the sinner's only refuge; the desires for inward holiness; the beginnings of the life of faith; the entrance upon that course of Christian experience, consistency, and self-denying labour in which he was preserved, a pattern to the whole of the church, and a blessing to the world, for five-and-forty eventful years.

His Christian character was marked by a lovely simplicity—a transparent sincerity—which at once convinced you how real it was. We think the epithet which, by almost common consent, was applied to him—"Good Mr. Bickersteth," speaks volumes in itself. Some of the features of his Christian character, which will occur to many readers, may just be mentioned. While most honest and unyielding in his affection to his own church, and his sense of her real superiority over all other systems, his heart was so enlarged by the constraining love of the Saviour, that he had a hand and a smile for every Christian brother, wherever he met him, if he only hoped they should be found together among the Lord's saints at His coming. Mention must be made of his peculiarly loving spirit. One hardly can believe that he was naturally reserved and selfish; but since we are told it was so, how complete the triumph of Divine grace that overlaid such a heart with a spirit so warm, and

so holy, and so attractive! "I ever wish," he wrote, "to have the most devoted servants of Christ for my most attached friends, and ever to give them most of my time and affectionate attention, not minding high things, but holy things." He has there sketched his intercourse with his brethren to the very life. Who does not remember his earnest look, his honest-hearted smile, and his hearty "hear, hear," when a speaker touched some topic of immediate interest that was kindling and germinating in his own warm heart? One never knew a man whose whole manner so completely thawed down everything frigid, and selfish, and contracted as he, who seemed in such a remarkable degree to combine the faith and labours of one great apostle and the loving spirit of another.

We must not enlarge. Our business is not to delineate a character, but to give a useful hint or two to young readers. One other characteristic feature must not be passed by,—his inexhaustible energies in doing good. If it were asked to describe his life in one word, we would say it was "a labour of love." When living in Hatton Court, he writes, "I am teaching a little girl, 'Woodd's Shorter Catechism.'" He did not content himself with not joining his fellow-clerks in their folly, but tried to lead them better; and he writes of them, "I trust there is some alteration for the better among my companions; if there be, it is thy work, O my God." His letters home were filled with things of everlasting value, and were eminently blessed to his parents and sisters. Occupied as his time was by pressing business, he joins a Widows' Friend Society, and fulfils his Lord's command to visit the widows and fatherless in their

affliction. His parents objected to his engaging in such labours; but mark his answer;—after showing the duty from Scripture, he says, “Indeed, my parents, I feel that I ought not to give up this work; and with sincerest love for you, I must say, I dare not.” When he went to Norwich, he replied to some similar objections his father made again, “What did I come to Norwich for? What is the best end of my existence, but this?” And when he was in Africa,—the land of death,—at that time expecting that the next funeral bell might be for him, he wrote a letter to be given to his wife in case he should die; in which he said, “I am satisfied it was my highest wisdom to come hither. Should I die, the Saviour whom I serve, and who has thus led me, will make this loss of my life for Him, a great and real gain to me, and not to me only, but you and His church. We parted in tears at Portsmouth, with heavy hearts; we shall meet again, to be with Him, who will wipe away all tears from our eyes.”

It has been said, truly, that the history of the world is the history of its great men. During the last twenty-five or thirty years there has hardly been any important movement in the Church of Christ in any part of this country, but Mr. Bickersteth was more or less taking his part. His influence in his own family was unusually blessed; his ministry in his parish was attended with abundant success; he was the mainspring of religious activity in his own country. As to the work of missions, he had hazarded his life on the deadliest field of heathen abominations; he gave fourteen best years of his life as secretary, to manage its operations; and then, for twenty years

more, he preached sermons and addressed meetings in all parts of the kingdom,—to quicken the zeal of the Christian Church,—to evangelise the Irish Romanists, the infidels on the Continent, the wandering tribes of Israel, as well as the heathen world. Indeed, his zeal knew no limits ; nor did his fidelity to his Divine Master relax its vigour. He used his utmost power to combine divided Christendom into one common brotherhood of saints ; while, studying the chart of prophecy, in a time of startling and convulsive changes, he mounted the tower and sounded an alarm, as a watchman to the Church of Christ.

Indeed, it were in vain to think of sketching the diversified and unwearied agencies for resisting error, and leavening the world with God's truth, of which he was the deviser or the promoter ; we must wait for that, until the grand mystery of the world and the Church shall be divulged, and we shall know even as also we are known.

But we must not conclude without a more distinct statement of the means by which such a life of exhausting labour was sustained and upheld. He was eminently practical and methodical in all his outward arrangements, and punctual in his appointments. But whatever was the pressure of public duties, his one grand concern was to find time, or make time, for holy fellowship between God and his own soul. He was eminently a man of prayer—prayer was his strength and comfort and relief—he lived and moved in it. He seemed to realize the Apostle's expression : "Praying always, with all prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving." He could not get on without prayer ; he felt

every day that he was called to work the works of God ; he prayed, for prayer brought him to God, and brought God to him : he went to his heavenly Father about everything, just as a child goes to his earthly father that loves him ; and he knew that God heard him ; and there you have the secret of Mr. Bickersteth's joy and energy, and faith, and patience, and hope. He foresaw the Lord always before him—that made his footing sure ; he knew that God was with him, and nothing moved him—no disappointment, no dark providence, no revolutions of empires, no falling away of false brethren, no ravages of death, no spread of Popery. He entered his chamber to meet the Lord ; he shut to his door ; he knew the Lord reigneth, be the people ever so unquiet,—he looked steadfastly up to Him, on whose head are many crowns, and he knew, that soon He will put down every foe,—silence every murmur, gather home every wanderer,—and dry every tear.

Reader, this loving pastor, this conscientious servant of God, this man of indomitable energy, and unwearied prayer, has ended his labours, and now he is with his Lord. But, unless we mistake, there is much in his story of what God did for him, and what he did for God, well calculated to make you wiser, holier. If the dark history and melancholy end of many a London clerk tells you what a young man, by folly, idleness, or vice, may sink to, this sketch may show you what a young man, with fewer advantages than some of you enjoy, with energy, conscientious diligence, by downright faithfulness to God, and consistent boldness in his cause, may be raised to. We want this sketch to show you that there is no sphere

of honourable usefulness that is denied to you ; no degree of veneration among good men you may not attain. What God made him he is ready to make you—the grace which transformed his soul is ready to renew yours—the Gospel which brought power and peace to him, may make you strong, resolute, and holy too. His difficulties were as great as yours ; your life's journey may be as prosperous as his ; he was once down to your level, grappling with your hardships ; you have before you the same bright career of usefulness in this life as he had ; you too may share his repose and triumphs in a better world.

“OCCUPY TILL I COME.”

LUKE XIX. 13.

'Tis not for man to trifle ! Life is brief,
And sin is here.
Our age is but the falling of a leaf—
A dropping tear.
We have no time to sport away the hours ;
All must be earnest in a world like ours.

Not many lives, but only one have we—
Frail, fleeting man !
How sacred should that one life ever be—
That narrow span !
Day after day fill'd up with blessed toil,
Hour after hour, still bringing in new spoil.

O life below !—How brief, and poor, and sad !

One heavy sigh.

O, life above !—How long, and fair, and glad !

An endless joy.

Oh, to have done for aye with dying here !

Oh, to begin the living in yon sphere !

O, day of time, how dark ! O, sky and earth,

How dull your hue !

O, day of Christ, how bright ! O sky and earth,

Made fair and new !

Come, better Eden, with thy fresher green,—

Come, brighter Salem, gladden all the scene !



—"Souls immortal must for ever heave
At something great; the glitter or the gold,—
The praise of mortals, or the praise of heaven.
Nor absolutely vain is human praise,
When human is supported by Divine."

It cannot be said regarding the subject of this article, that her efforts on behalf of religion and morality met with a neglect so common in the case of others interested in the same cause; but, on the con-

trary, it may be asserted that few, if any, of those whose topics are of a more worldly, and hence more popular character, have ever attained to the same eminence, or commanded a more extensive class of readers and admirers. The perusal of the biography of this remarkable woman can hardly fail to elicit the interest even of those who have not realized that spirituality of mind to which she, by God's grace, attained: for her rare powers enabled her to present her subjects in so clear a light as to arrest the attention, and very often to convince the judgment, of persons whose hearts were, after all, the true obstacles to their reception of the system she advocated. The position in which she was placed during the earlier part of her life was one well fitted to dull the religious tone of many minds; and her triumph over the dangers which in this respect beset her, proves the power of that gracious Spirit whose instrument she was destined to be in the accomplishment of great good, and under whose influence she was safe while learning the wisdom of the world's Egypt—a wisdom which she afterwards turned to so profitable an account.

Hannah More was one of five sisters, the children of Jacob More, a gentleman descended from a Norfolk family of great respectability. Her father appears to have been a man of considerable classical attainments, having received a learned education under the guidance of the brother of the well-known Dr. Samuel Clarke. Mr. More was afterwards appointed to the superintendence of a grammar-school in the parish of Stapleton, Gloucestershire, where his celebrated daugh-

ter, the subject of this article, was born, in the year 1745. After a residence of some years in the place of Hannah's birth, her parents removed to Bristol. It had been the desire of Mr. and Mrs. More that their daughters should receive an education which would enable them to procure independence by conducting a boarding-school in the city of Bristol; and accordingly the eldest was sent to a French school, where she acquired information which she imparted to her younger sisters on her return to the parental roof at the end of each week. It is refreshing to observe the affectionate unanimity which prevailed among the members of this family in early life, and continued without interruption until the hand of death snatched them one by one, leaving the illustrious Hannah the sole survivor at last. We have evidence sufficient to prove that the latter evinced at an early age remarkable aptitude for learning, and had been acquiring information, without the knowledge of her parents, while present at the instruction imparted to her elder sisters. At the early age of eight years she displayed an amount of knowledge quite astonishing. It has been observed that Mr. Jacob More was possessed of considerable classical erudition, having enjoyed the advantage of excellent instruction. He was a person also of unusually retentive memory, and hence although having lost the largest part of his library when removing first from his native place, he was enabled to communicate much of the learning he had gleaned from it to his children. Mr. More is reported to have entertained a great aversion to any thing which might be counted pedantry in the female

sex, and hence was rather startled when Hannah made such rapid progress in no less deep a subject than that of mathematics. There was no need, however, to have been apprehensive, since the mind of his daughter was receiving science, not to parade it, but that it might be subsidiary to the great end for which she seems to have been created—to forward the course of true religion, which had been waning so long in England. To be qualified for this task required a mind trained to reasoning; and it is well known how eminently the study of mathematics contributes to effect this desirable object.

When the Misses More had been considered by competent judges as sufficiently qualified to undertake the important task of educating the young, a boarding school was opened by them in Bristol; and the success of this establishment was, from the outset, very great. The eldest sister had only attained the age of twenty-one years when entering upon the arduous post, but the high moral and religious tone of her character, in addition to the well-known ability she possessed for imparting instruction, gave her a claim upon the public superior to that which age alone can confer; and many entrusted their children to her care in unbounded confidence—a confidence which was never found to have been misplaced. Among those with whom the Mores became acquainted, and who evinced a lively interest in their welfare, was Sir James Stonehouse, a physician of eminence, who had practised his profession with success at Northampton, but relinquished it to take holy orders, and removed to Bristol, where he was greatly esteemed. This excellent man

was much struck with the strong indications of genius manifested by Hannah ; and he was the means of enabling her to acquire sound theological knowledge by directing her to the best sources on this all-important subject. Among the gifts which she possessed at an early age, may be mentioned that of conversation, of which we have a striking proof in an occurrence which took place when she had only reached her sixteenth year. Having been attacked with a dangerous illness, an eminent physician, Dr. Woodward, was consulted, and prescribed. During his attendance he one day entered into conversation with his youthful patient upon subjects of literature, but so fascinated was he by her powers of conveying information and the amount of her knowledge, that he had actually left her room without once inquiring concerning her health, and only remembered the original object of his visit when descending the stairs.

We come now to an event in the life of this admirable woman, which is mentioned because it may have exercised a considerable influence upon the future course of her life. When twenty-one years of age, she received the addresses of a gentleman of property, very much her senior in age. Their marriage was to have taken place, but some difficulties arose which rendered such a step unadvisable, and from that time the engagement was mutually dissolved. The admiration, however, of the gentleman continued ever after ; and he, at his death, bequeathed to her the sum of 1,000*l.*, a plain proof of the high esteem in which she was held by him ; indeed, her good qualities had

often been the subject of his conversation among his friends.

It is difficult to say what effect the duties of married life might have had in retarding the public efforts of Hannah More, and hence we look with interest upon this occurrence in her life.

The period during which the subject of this article resided so much in the metropolis is a most important one in her biography, because the knowledge acquired at that time enabled her to do what her previous confinement to a limited sphere would most probably have prevented ; and we cannot but see that her visit to a scene of such peculiar temptation was allowed by Him whose zealous servant she was destined to prove hereafter, in order that she might be able to procure materials for her future work. Indeed, the temptations which London presented were, in her case, very strong ; for, although her mind had been imbued with religion under the parental roof and afterwards from intercourse with pious sisters, her literary taste attracted her to society which, unhappily, is too often supplied by persons more interested in the things "seen" than in those "unseen." When we consider how unusually qualified for literary society Hannah More was, both as regards her information on a variety of subjects, and also her conversational powers, we can appreciate the danger to which, at the age of twenty-three, she became exposed on her first visit to a place then, as now, the arena for the talent of the world.

Among the constellations which shone in the firma-

ment of letters when she came to the metropolis were the classical Johnson—the versatile Garrick—the solid Burke—the accomplished Reynolds—and very many others, whose society, as might have been expected, was highly delightful to one who had now an opportunity of calling into play the information she had been accumulating : and the reception given to her was indeed calculated to unsettle many a youthful mind. To be the admiration of a man like Johnson, who was the terror of so many, even among the gifted—to be listened to by him who was in society, for the most part, the only speaker—to hear her literary efforts so highly commended by him who was never lavish of his praise—all this was enough to unsteady the balance of one but lately arrived from a very different scene, and realizing what must have far transcended her most sanguine expectations. It is certainly remarkable how great an interest was manifested in Hannah More by the great lexicographer : it was not the feeling of a superior to an inferior which the *lion* exhibited, but an affection which sprang from real admiration of her disposition and talents ; and it was observed by all who knew him that he never so thoroughly unbent himself as when in her company ; bearing even cheerfully that difference of opinion which in others he was so indisposed to tolerate at all. Nor was Johnson the only one of eminence who seemed attracted to her. She was flattered by the attentions of the most gifted in various spheres of talent ; and the following extract from a letter of one of her sisters, written to a friend in the country, describes the dangers to which she was exposed :—“ If Hannah’s head stands proof

against all the adulation and kindness of the great folks here, why then I will venture to say that nothing of this kind will hurt her hereafter. Two carriages at the door, Mrs. Boscawen and Sir Joshua Reynolds—the latter to take us to an auction of pictures—the former paid a short visit, that she might not break in upon our engagements.”

Among the intimate friends of Hannah More, after her introduction to the literary circle of the metropolis, was the celebrated David Garrick—a man no less distinguished for his histrionic powers than for his elegant literary taste. Having come to London at the same time with his erudite fellow-townsmen, Johnson, he had soon far outstripped him as regards worldly position, for he reached pecuniary affluence when the former was in obscure poverty, endeavouring to subsist upon the small sums doled out to him for his contributions to the press. It may be said that few men have gained literary eminence more to the satisfaction of others than Garrick. His manner was affable and agreeable in society; and those only who had the privilege of meeting him could appreciate the variety of his acquirements for pleasing. Although Goldsmith, in his sarcastic epigram, speaks of him as one who was an actor only “when off the stage,” this does not seem to have been the general opinion, and must be attributed to a little envy in the eccentric author of “The Deserted Village.”

If Johnson evinced a decided partiality for the subject of the present sketch, he was rivalled in this respect by the famous actor just mentioned. The house of the latter in town and country was almost

her place of residence; and she seemed to have gained the affection of both host and hostess: for Mrs. Garrick bestowed upon her every proof of kindness, and seemed to enjoy much her society. It is not surprising that the attention of such persons should have been most gratifying to one of a warm and sensitive disposition; and we consequently find that Hannah looked back upon this period of her life as one of great enjoyment, although she afterwards learned to estimate it at its right value.

It has been remarked, that the mind of Miss More had been imbued with religion under the roof of her parents, and afterwards of her sisters, with whom she resided first when only twelve years of age; and its influence prevented her, when in London, from conforming to many practices deemed unobjectionable by the majority of those in whose society she mixed; but at this period she was far from supposing it wrong to enter into amusements, the nature of which she afterwards discovered to be so dangerous to the spiritual state of frail man.

This especially refers to the stage, for which she evinced, as might be expected in one constituted as she was, a decided partiality. While fully alive to the evils which so often result from this species of entertainment, she was disposed rather to attribute them to its abuse, deeming that if reformed it was likely to prove a lawful and elevating enjoyment. Her opinions in this respect were likely to be strengthened by her intercourse with such a man as Garrick, who was, in every respect, far above the members of his profession in conduct and feeling. Indeed, it is stated that one

only of that profession was ever seen at his table, so little did he countenance actors in general. It is not surprising, then, that Miss More should listen to his encouraging language and that of other competent judges, and not only attend theatrical exhibitions, but actually engage in a work intended for the stage. This was the tragedy of "Percy," the outline of which was sketched in London and completed in twelve months. Previous to this she had appeared as an author, having published two poems, "Sir Eldred of the Bower," and "The Bleeding Rock," also a volume of essays on various subjects, chiefly designed for the members of the female sex.

In the year 1778, the tragedy of "Percy," was produced at Drury-lane, and gained a triumph; its intrinsic merits having been enhanced by the prologue and epilogue of Garrick, and its success promoted by the friendly exertions of that influential man. The author of "Percy," was encouraged by its success to attempt another tragedy; and in the following year appeared "The Fatal Falsehood," a drama of domestic interest, which was performed at Covent-garden theatre: it is to be observed, that she had, five years previously, brought out, at the Bath theatre, a drama, entitled, "The Inflexible Captive."

Before the production of the "Fatal Falsehood," an event occurred, which, though it cast a gloom over the life of Hannah More, may have been permitted by the Most High to draw her from the vortex into which the temptations arising out of her theatrical success might have plunged her: we allude to the death of Garrick. That such a man should exercise influence over any

person upon whom he lavished so much kind attention is natural enough; and had he lived, it is impossible to say whether the subject of this paper might not have been more completely involved in worldliness: but the hand of death which spares "nor great nor small," snatched away David Garrick, leaving an attached widow to mourn his loss. The account of his funeral is graphically given in a letter from Hannah to her sister. Speaking of the service performed over the great actor's remains, she observes, "Such an awful stillness reigned, every word was audible. How I felt it! Yet a very little while, and he shall say to the worm, 'Thou art my brother, and to corruption, Thou art my mother and my sister.' So passes the fashion of this world. And the very night he was buried the playhouses were as full, and the Pantheon was as crowded, as if no such thing had happened. Nay, the very mourners took part in the revelries of the night." The affection which the widow of Garrick entertained towards her husband's friend was manifested in a desire to have the latter constantly in her house; indeed, she was wont to call her playfully her domestic chaplain.

The time which elapsed from the death of her esteemed friend, David Garrick, until the publication of her first work, expressly directed against the vices and errors of the age, Hannah More passed for the most part in that society to which circumstances had attached her. She was frequently on a visit at the house of Mrs. Garrick, and enjoyed the intellectual converse of many who held high places in literature,—not excepting divines and dignitaries of the church;

among whom were included Horne, the well-known commentator on the Psalms; Dr. Porteous, successively Bishop of Chester and London, Lowth and Kennicott, the celebrated Hebraists; with many others. By all these eminent persons she was highly valued for her amiability and intellectual attainments. After the removal of the great actor who displayed so deep an interest about her success as a dramatic writer, she retired from that sphere; although her last tragedy, subsequently to that event, produced was most successful. It is evident to all who peruse the letters of Hannah More, written between the years 1780 and 1788,—the latter the time when she was engaged in the composition of her work, “Thoughts on the importance of the Manners of the Great to General Society,”—that a change was being wrought in her mind regarding the importance of religion. This change, as generally happens indeed, was gradual, not sudden. There is manifest an increasing dissatisfaction towards the world’s so-called amusements, a craving after something higher, an inclination to withdraw from that sphere of life where so many temptations to worldliness are presented. This design was gradually accomplished, until she at last became possessor of a retired spot near Bristol,—which she named Cowslip Green, because of the numbers of that flower which grew in the neighbourhood. Here she was enabled to pass a portion of her time in retirement, of which she felt the need more and more every day. In the year 1782, she published a volume of sacred dramas, some of which, it is believed, were written before she had attained the age of twenty; and in 1786 appeared

from her pen "Florio," and "The Bas Bleu;" the latter of which poems received the unbounded praise of the dreaded literary censor, Samuel Johnson, who was generally parsimonious in his commendation of poets : he called Hannah the best of the female versifiers.

It has been remarked that a change had been gradually taking place in the mind of Miss More, regarding the importance of religion in the world. Circumstances had placed her for many years in contact with those classes of society inaccessible to others who might desire to do them good. Not only had she a general knowledge of their manners in public, but she was acquainted with their domestic habits, and thus fully qualified to undertake the task which a sense of duty imposed upon her—that of pointing out the danger in which so many were placed, who constituted the higher ranks of this country. The author of "Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great" had already won a name as a dramatist and poet ; but she declined to avail herself of this reputation, and sent forth the piece anonymously. Great was the excitement which it caused on its appearance ; the first edition was eagerly bought up, and very many conjectures were hazarded as to the name of the writer. By some it was ascribed to Wilberforce ; by others to the Bishop of London : a few, however, of her friends recognized her pen. In 1791 was published another work, which may be considered a sequel to that just alluded to, and was entitled "An Estimate of the Religion of the Fashionable World." Her courage had increased since the issue of the former treatise, and she entered fully into the true condition

of things, as regards religion in the higher classes, drawing attention to the absence of piety, even among those who did not neglect the outward ordinances of religion. This work, like its predecessor, was received with avidity, and, despite the unpalatable truth it discloses, found numerous readers among the persons whose vices were so powerfully rebuked. In two years it had reached a fifth edition. Perhaps we can hardly find an instance of similar success under the same circumstances. When we remember the state of that party against whose faults the two preceding treatises were aimed, and yet find that readers were supplied from it, we cannot but conclude that the compositions were distinguished by unusual vigour and acquaintance with the various phases of human nature. It is thus that talent commands the attention of those rebuked, while inferior ability, however sincere its possessor, cannot gain a hearing.

We have seen Miss More successful in her contest for fame in the sphere of poetry and the drama. We have contemplated her equally successful when engaged in a very different kind of work, even that of combating the vices and religious indifference of a class in which she had moved so long herself, and with whose habits she was so well acquainted. We have now to behold her engaged in a design different from both, even contending against error in another rank, and descending to teach the very rudiments of learning, sacred and secular, to the ignorant. In the end of the year 1789, her four sisters had acquired sufficient property to admit of their retiring from the management of the school at Bristol, to which they had hitherto devoted their talents.

A house was taken at Bath, and the attached relatives purposed dividing their time between this residence and "Cowslip Green." It was during her sojourn at the latter place with her sister Martha, that Hannah was attracted in her rambles to the condition of the people inhabiting the neighbourhood, and her pity was deeply excited by their ignorance and gross depravity. Here was a fit object for a soul like hers; a mind exalted enough to teach the educated could bend to the wants of the most ignorant of her fellow-creatures. Delay was not a characteristic of this remarkable woman: with the help of her sisters, she set about the establishment of a school, which soon numbered three hundred children. Here it was manifest that ignorance is not confined to the very lowest classes. The scheme for the education of the latter met with the most decided opposition from the farmers, and some of the most opulent among them declared that this part of the country never prospered since the introduction of religion into it by the monks of Glastonbury.

The history of the Cheddar-schools and the success attained by the exertions of Hannah More and her sisters, furnishes ample encouragement to untiring perseverance. The object was accomplished, but not without difficulties which would have dispirited many less ardent in the cause of truth. The opposition which most distressed them in their educational efforts among the poor arose in a quarter from whence it was least expected. The curate of Blagdon, the parish in which Cowslip Green was situated, hearing of the success which attended the Cheddar-school, earnestly entreated that steps might be taken to establish

a similar one in the scene of his ministration. After a refusal on the first application, the Miss Mores at length complied, and means were adopted to accomplish his expressed wishes. This person displayed himself, however, in a character most unbecoming one who filled the ministerial office. Instead of cordially co-operating in a scheme, of his own suggesting, he took every opportunity of injuring the reputation of the excellent ladies who were assisting to improve the condition of the poor, declaring that they had introduced sectarianism into the parish, and accusing the schoolmaster whom they had appointed of using most disrespectful language towards the dignitaries of the Established Church. For a time, the misrepresentations of the curate of Blagdon succeeded, and the schoolmaster was removed at the desire of the Bishop of the Diocese; but on re-consideration of the evidence, he was restored; and henceforth the calumniator failed in all his attempts to thwart the Christian efforts of Hannah More and her sisters.

This occurrence is mentioned as illustrative of the trials to which the benevolent are exposed in their efforts to do good, and also as exhibiting the subject of this article in her true light—that of an eminent follower of Him who said, “Blessed are the meek.” Her conduct exemplified that practical Christianity which so strongly pervades her writings. Though taunted by language of the most uncourteous kind, she preserved that calm dignity which characterizes the exalted Christian; and when she deemed it necessary to defend her proceedings before the Bishop of the Diocese, her letter was a demonstration of the justice

of her cause, and met triumphantly every charge which had been preferred against her, to the complete satisfaction of all right-minded persons.

The following extract from a letter addressed to her by the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Dr. Beadon) shows the estimation in which her noble labours were held by that prelate :—" I can only say that if you are not a sincere and zealous friend to the constitutional establishment, both in Church and State, you are one of the greatest hypocrites, as well as one of the best writers in his Majesty's dominions."

There were few things more likely to distress Miss More than any misunderstanding with one whose office she respected ; and her whole conduct in the Blagdon controversy proves how peculiarly fitted she was to advance the cause of religion without disturbing the established order of things, or unnecessarily arousing prejudices.

The Cheddar-schools excited the lively interest of many in eminent positions, and among the rest William Wilberforce, whose letters, accompanied by contributions, manifest the deep satisfaction which that great and good man derived from accounts of their success, and the unqualified admiration with which the founder and her sisters were viewed by him.

We have seen the subject of this article a successful competitor for fame as a poetess and dramatist ; we marked her when her energies were directed towards the mental improvement of the ignorant at Cheddar : we have yet to behold her in a new character, as the able writer of a series of tracts which were signally successful in stemming the torrent of anarchy and infidelity which threatened to inundate the land. T

principles which led to the French Revolution had begun to take deep root in England, and the power of reading, which the admirable Sunday-school system, established by Chancellor Raikes, introduced among the lower orders, was unhappily used by many in the perusal of seditious and irreligious pamphlets and tracts, which were circulated in immense numbers by those disaffected towards religion and order. Miss More's friends were urgent upon her to undertake some publication with a view to counteract the fearful tendency of such infamous productions, but she modestly doubted her qualifications for the task. After prayerful reflection, however, she applied herself to the composition of a tract entitled "Village Politics," in which she laid bare the folly and wickedness of the persons who sought to spread sedition in the land.

This inimitable production was written in language which the most ignorant could understand; and although published anonymously, attained an almost unparalleled circulation. The success of "Village Politics" induced its author to undertake a series of tracts, called "The Cheap Repository;" and the numbers of this series appeared with unfailing regularity for two years, notwithstanding the frequently impaired health of the writer. About the same period, she wrote the celebrated reply to the atheistic speech of Dupont in the National Convention of France. It is impossible now to estimate the importance of these peculiar portions of our author's writing. Their efficacy in checking the evil state of things then existing was fully acknowledged by her contemporaries, and the time may come when we shall be glad to have recourse to them again; indeed, the circulation of the tract entitled "Village

Politics" was found useful during the prevalence of the disloyal opinions commonly called "Chartism."

It is interesting to read the journals of Hannah More, and to trace the progress of religion in her soul. In that dated January 1, 1798, we find, "Let me now dedicate myself, Lord, to Thee, with a more entire surrender than I have ever yet made. First, I resolve, by the grace of God, to be more watchful over my temper. Secondly, Not to speak rashly or harshly. Thirdly, To watch over my thoughts: not to indulge in vain, idle, resentful, impatient worldly imaginations. Fourthly, To strive after closer communion with God. Fifthly, To let no hour pass without lifting up my heart to Him through Christ. Sixthly, Not to let a day pass without some thought of death. Seventhly, To ask myself every night when I lie down, Am I fit to die? Eighthly, To labour to do and to suffer the whole will of God. Ninthly, To cure my over-anxiety by casting myself on God, in Christ." About a year later was published another work, entitled "Strictures on Female Education," which dealt unsparingly with the defects of the system prevailing among the better classes, and consequently gave, as might have been expected, offence in many quarters; but the enlightened authoress was prepared for the consequences, and did not shrink from her post. In the beginning of the year 1802, Hannah More determined to quit her residence of Cowslip Green; and having been offered a spot of ground about a mile distant, she built upon it a house, and exercised her taste upon the grounds around it, which were elegantly arranged, and planted with excellent skill. In this spot, which was called "Barley Wood," she remained

until age and infirmities rendered her removal to Clifton necessary, a short time previous to her entering into rest. In the mean time her pen was not idle. She still laboured in the good cause. In 1805, appeared "Hints towards forming the Character of a Young Princess,"—a book written at the desire of one who held a high office in the Church. This work is full of valuable advice on the all-important subject of the training of those destined hereafter to occupy a high position in their country, and may be read with profit by every person of whatever rank. It was favourably received by all, except those who contend against the religious element in education; and this party gave vent to their anger in the pages of the *Edinburgh Review*, where the work was violently assailed; not however to the injury of its circulation, which continued great.

It is seldom we find the career of God's servants unchequered by sadness, and certainly that of Hannah More is not one of the exceptions. Her health was always more or less delicate during her life, and her journals inform us how often she was compelled to endure severe bodily pain; but her resignation under it was a reflection of her sanctification. She preserved that cheerfulness which furnishes to the unconverted a kind of evidence concerning the truth of religion, not to be controverted. We shall not attempt a minute account of the many occurrences in her long and useful life, nor allude particularly to the titles of the productions of her pen, in addition to those already mentioned. It will be sufficient to remark that she was not spared that chastening which the Lord administers to His most faithful servants. She

saw her loved sisters removed,—this was to be expected of those her seniors in age ; but when the hand of death snatched away the youngest, Martha,—familiarily called Patty, who, though herself delicate, had been such a comfort to Hannah in her frequent illnesses, and the solace of her advancing years,—the cup seemed full ; yet she bowed beneath the rod, and looked forward to that consolation denied to all save those who are followers of the Lamb,—the assurance of meeting the loved but lost ones in a land of joy. It has been remarked that she remained in Barley Wood until a few years before her decease. Her removal hence was deemed necessary by her friends, because of her increasing inability to superintend a large establishment, and the unchecked power thus given to domestics who were, unhappily, found ready to take advantage of these opportunities, to the great loss of her property. She was removed to Clifton ; where, after many wonderful rallies when apparently at the point of death, she yielded up her spirit to her Redeemer on Friday, September 6, 1833.

When estimating the character of this admirable woman, we must not be satisfied to class her among the worthies of her own sex, as though she needed our indulgence, while criticising her literary talents and qualifications. On the contrary, we view her as one who would have been an ornament to the other sex—one who ought to be remembered by all who value the welfare of their fellow-creatures in time and eternity.

When contemplating her placed in the midst of temptations to seek after worldly greatness, and remem-

bering that she possessed so much which fitted her to accomplish such a design, we the more admire, as we behold her calmly withdrawing from this sphere. Nor did she at once denounce the habits of that society in which she had mingled, but gave herself time for prayerful reflection, and then discharged the Christian duty by faithfully addressing a class which she knew from personal experience to be addicted to things most dangerous to the spiritual condition of the soul.

If we be asked, what peculiar benefits the writings of Mrs. More conferred upon this land; we answer that, among many others, they were the means of introducing a kind of works since become general, namely, works wherein the authors have the courage to teach religious truths; not as found in the pages of the "Spectator," or Samuel Johnson,—which after all are more or less a compromise with the world, and rather calculated to prove useful to the infidel than to the professing Christian; but plain gospel religion—salvation by faith in the Redeemer, and the evidence of that faith in the life; in not being conformed to this world, but transformed in the renewing of the mind.

The experience of Hannah More concerning the stage, and her renunciation of the modified opinions which she once held on this subject, present valuable evidence to those who are waverers about the lawfulness of attending theatrical entertainments. Her opinion is to be found in the preface to the dramas published in the collected edition of her works. The language is a plain condemnation of

the theatre against all the sophistical arguments of its defenders. When we consider the range of subjects which the pen of this remarkable woman traversed, we cannot but appreciate the versatility of her genius. She is equally at home when addressing the titled worldling or reading a lesson to the demagogue's dupe by the lips of Will Chip.* Her knowledge of human nature in its various shapes, and her command of simple yet striking language, enabled her to arrest the attention of all classes of readers, and Bishops hesitated not to recommend in their charges her ethical works. The intrinsic value of her writings is proved by the fact that many of them, though published anonymously at first, reached a circulation almost unrivalled, from "Thoughts on the Importance of the Manners of the Great," published in 1788, to "Cœlebs in Search of a Wife," which appeared twenty years later, and had reached in England the eleventh edition in the space of nine months. Yet all this literary success failed to make her think of herself "more highly than we ought to think," and we find in her private papers language expressive of the deepest self-abasement when the world was resounding with her praises.

The study of the writings of this exalted Christian must be a profitable employment for all who engage in it. All ranks, and both sexes, will surely find in them something adapted to their particular positions and interesting to their peculiar minds, while the elegant simplicity of the writer's style will serve as a model for imitation. When an intimate acquaintance has thus been formed with one whose talents enabled her to confer such lasting usefulness, a question may

arise, whether all that usefulness was attributable to the possession of gifts bestowed only on the smallest number of mankind. The perusal of her biography will give the answer to this question ; and inform us that she owed almost as much to industry as to genius, and that the information which she possessed on such a variety of subjects, and without which she could not have accomplished so much, was the fruit of close application in early years, and a determination fully carried out to overcome difficulties, however great, rather than to succumb and turn to studies less demanding the concentrated powers of the mind. As a proof of her perseverance, it may be mentioned that she had attained when comparatively a child to a most accurate knowledge of the French tongue. The rudiments of this language, acquired under the instruction of her eldest sister, had been made the groundwork of a thorough acquaintance with its peculiar difficulties ; and the occasional presence at her father's table of some officers, who were prisoners, on *parole*, in England during the war with France, was turned to a profitable account, for she thus gained a familiarity with the native accent which cannot be conveyed by books of instruction or from the lips of any except those who speak French as their vernacular. It was the result of her experience, that the greatest difficulties which beset learners on all subjects are found almost at the threshold of their studies, and that on their resolution to overcome these mainly depends future progress, When we reflect upon the fact that many persons of both sexes squander the most precious hours of their existence, either in idleness or in the perusal of works

calculated neither to strengthen the reasoning powers nor furnish the memory with useful knowledge, we see the importance of presenting the example of one who did not trust to the possession of consummate abilities for success, but improved them by careful cultivation. It is much to be desired that those who comprise the better classes of this land, and consequently possess more leisure than is at the command of the labouring population, should consider the responsibility of the position in which Providence has placed them, and endeavour to improve by diligent culture the faculties of the mind. Thus we should have if not many equal to her whose example we urge, at least a larger number qualified to participate in the same good work.

Concerning the personal character of Mrs. Hannah More, there can be only one opinion. It was distinguished by the peculiar excellencies found in God's most highly-favoured servants. Notwithstanding her constant complaints about her own shortcomings and failings, there are few whose lives present so little inconsistent with the Christian profession. Her ideas on the conduct which should characterize a disciple of Christ will appear gloomy to those only who desire to do what that glorious Master says cannot be done—to serve God and mammon. Her religion was marked by cheerfulness, and the fact that children were uniformly attracted to her is strong evidence on this point. In practice, she was as far removed from sternness as from levity; in doctrine, from Antinomianism as from semi-Pelagianism. In short, she resembled him whose character and writings were the

subject of her pen when seventy years had passed over her head,—the great Apostle of the Gentiles : becoming, in the true sense, “all things to all men,” that she might save some. She had been signally favoured as regards pecuniary competence, having realized thirty thousand pounds by her writings ; but her liberality during life, and her handsome bequests to various benevolent objects, showed whose steward she had always considered herself. In conclusion ; we may say, if the possession of transcendent talents, gladly acknowledged by the most gifted at a remarkable period of English history ; if the withdrawal of those talents from the service of the world to make them altogether subservient to the glory of the Most High ; if the exhibiting personally a character which seemed the transcript of that delineated as the Christian character in the New Testament ; if these things constitute a claim for admission into the Gallery of “The Great and Good,” the collection would be incomplete unless a niche had been reserved for Hannah More.



JAMES DAVIES,
THE WELSH SCHOOLMASTER.

BORN, AUGUST 23, 1765. DIED, OCTOBER 2, 1849.

“What evangelic religion is, is told in two words: Faith and Charity, or Belief and Practice.”—MILTON.

WHAT, place a village schoolmaster among the Wilberforces, the Bickersteths, the Simeons, and other worthies who are entitled to be called Great and Good? Yes, it is even so; a name and a place among

the very chiefest servants of God belong to one who, wholly unknown to the world, and but very little known to the Church, yet worked as nobly on earth, and now shines as brightly in heaven as the men whose character and acts are enshrined in the hearts and memories of all.

God has many workmen of whom their fellow-workmen know little or nothing, and of whose work, as it makes but little noise, and appears to make but little show, they take but little account ; but in the great day it will be made manifest that they have noiselessly, but surely, added stone to stone in the spiritual temple, and been ever diligent in pursuing their heavenly Father's business. The day when the Lord makes up his jewels, and enshrines them in the many crowns that will then encircle his triumphant brow, will make manifest many a dazzling gem whose splendour was not perceived or rightly estimated even by those who had eyes and hearts to discern some of the precious stones that were suffered to exhibit their brilliancy before men for the sole purpose that men seeing their beauty, might glorify the Hand that made them. Among such may be ranked James Davies,—the aged, the humble, the laborious, and the persevering village schoolmaster of the Devauden, and of Llangattock-Lingoed, both rural parishes in Wales. From the pursuits of such a lowly sphere, it may be asked what points of character can be gathered which may make out our claim to enrol James Davies among the *great* and *good* ? A brief narrative of his life, his labours, and his death, will fully, we think, substantiate his right to rank with the noblest and the best. In fact,

the very best argument to be brought forward in support of James Davies's patent of nobility in the kingdom of God, is the following letter, which he wrote to his sister on her expressing surprise and perplexity how her brother could intend, in the words of his biographer, "not only to labour at Llangattock without wages, but also to supply the school-children as well as the poor of the parish, with books at his own cost." It must be remembered, or rather to our readers it must be premised, that the schoolmaster was at this moment in his eighty-fourth year :

"Devauden School, September 15th, 1848.

"My dear Sister,—I was very glad to receive your letter, as it will give me an opportunity of explaining myself, which I shall be very glad to do. You ask me how I am to live; which certainly is very kind of you, for it would seem you are under a concern for my comfort and well-being. A gentleman gave me £100, which I have upon interest, and it is very likely it may support me as long as a support may be wanting. You may, indeed, find fault with me for acting in this way; but if I had not made these proposals, it is very likely a school would not have been built at Llangattock, and you know what a neglected place it has been, and you cannot but rejoice that something is doing to benefit it. I am very glad to bear all the blame you may lay upon me; but let me seriously ask you, is it nothing that the dear children of that place should be taught their duty to God and man; and that it should be impressed on their minds that Christ Jesus came into the world, and bled and died to save sinners, and to redeem them from eternal misery?"

This letter will at once give more than a glimpse of the character we shall attempt to delineate ; and the simple faith, ardent love, and most disinterested zeal for souls it exhibits, justifies our assertion, that the village schoolmaster was both great and good.

James Davies was born at Grosmont, in Monmouthshire, in the year 1765, and, like many other eminently pious and useful persons, had to look back upon the early religious training of a careful mother, by whom his youthful mind was stored with Scriptural knowledge, and instructed in the services of the Church of England.

It is not necessary to linger long upon the earlier years of James Davies's life ; he was very imperfectly taught reading, writing, and arithmetic, in one of those apologies for schools, unfortunately so common at the close of the last century. He was then placed in the office of a relation, a lawyer ; but in a very short time he abandoned a pursuit the duties of which appeared to be opposed to the tenderness of his disposition. The cause of his resolve to leave his master was hastened by the following curious incident, which we quote in the words of his biographer :—" Meeting one day, in one of the streets of Abergavenny, an old woman who knew his father, she thus accosted the boy : ' Jamie Davies, why did your father, who is an honest man, put you to a lawyer ?—no lawyers go to heaven.' " Fearful and indiscriminate addition this, on the part of the old Welsh woman, to the sufficiently painful denunciation of our Lord upon the lawyers of his time, which we would heartily hope was not deserved by those who flourished in James Davies's time, any

more than the lawyers of our own day. The old woman's saying had, however, its effect : James Davies was so frightened that he left his master, and remained at Bristol unknown to his family for three weeks ; and thus Wales lost a lawyer, but many an immortal soul gained by his conscientious refusal to remain, even to his temporal advantage, in a profession which, as he thought, might endanger his eternal welfare.

We must hurry through his after occupations of weaver and pedlar, and small shop-keeper ; in all of which he was in training, by a consistent course of the most humble and self-denying conduct, for the exertions of that after sphere to which it was God's purpose to call him. The very habits of that humble life he led for many years, made him intimately acquainted with the wants and ways of his poor brethren far and wide, and must have secretly determined him to spend and be spent for their best interests, both worldly and spiritual.

In the biography which has been published of James Davies, there appears no record of any absolute change having taken place in his spiritual nature ; and in the absence of that record, but with the fact before us that his whole life seems to have been a consistent embodiment of truly Christian faith and love, we can hardly avoid the conviction, that from his earliest childhood he was the Lord's, and as he grew in years he grew in grace, and manifested the spiritual life by being ever "about his heavenly Father's business." Nevertheless, it is ever satisfactory to have some traces afforded us of the early leading of the soul to find safety in Christ

for itself, as well as to see that soul earnest for the salvation of others.

Early taught himself, he seems to have had a deep impression on his mind of the great value of early leading the youthful mind to God ; and that conviction was strengthened into a determination to devote his own life to the work by a tract which was given him, on his confirmation, by the good Bishop of Llandaff, Richard Watson. Even when a wandering pedlar, he began his blessed course by taking a boy from his parents, placing him at school, and supporting him out of the scanty earnings of his laborious life.

In 1812, James Davies was first permitted to engage in the work to which he had long before given the intentions and affections of his mind and heart. After receiving a little preliminary instruction, he became the master of a newly-established parish school, at Usk,—of which, indeed, he himself was a principal originator, and to which he was a liberal subscriber. His salary was £30 ; and he continued here for three years, working well and gaining the respect and approbation of those who superintended the school.

It is at this period that our interest in the memoir of James Davies was excited ; for the next step recorded in his life led us onwards until we completed the perusal of a history, which, all simple as it is, yet we felt to belong to one who was God's own workmanship—a high shepherd in Christ's fold ; and of one worthy to be called the Araunah of his neighbourhood.

It appears that his frequent journeys as a pedlar led him over a tract of country where the population were indeed left to live and die without instruction, and were truly as sheep without a shepherd. At some distance from the Devauden Hills, at New Church, "the stated service of the parish church was never performed more frequently than once a fortnight; and six weeks were often allowed to pass away without the attendance of a clergyman." While at Kilgwrrwg, nearer to the Devauden, "the little church was in decay; rain and snow penetrated through the roof into the body of the building, and a neighbouring farmer folded his sheep within the walls of God's house. On twelve Sundays in the year, and on those only, was public worship performed in that church; and on those occasions the accumulated filth of sheep and cattle was shovelled out the day before." This state of things had deeply touched the heart of James Davies; and before his appointment to the school at Usk, he had harboured the longing wish to aid the ministrations of the new clergyman of those neglected parishes by forming and teaching a school within their limits.

Often it seems did James Davies walk over from Usk to Kilgwrrwg to attend the services conducted by his kindred spirit, Mr. Jones, and often must they have communed upon that subject ever near and dear to the heart of the Usk schoolmaster—the establishment of a school. After three years of delay the wish was granted,—land was given; and after raising the necessary funds a school room was built, and James Davies gave up the certain salary of £30 a year for one which frequently fell short of £15, and never

exceeded £20. Well may his biographer say, "On this as on all occasions of his life, he discarded every selfish consideration, and cheerfully exchanged the certain income which he enjoyed at Usk for a precarious income at the Devauden. Oh, what a lesson this for money-seekers, but above all for Christians in every station, in the church, in the state, in professions, and in commerce! James Davies had no thought for self; he felt he was not his own—and having bread, water raiment, and a dwelling, he laboured to feed Christ's lambs, and was amply content with Christ's wages here, ever looking with the humblest hope for that eternal inheritance which Christ's blood had purchased for him.

"In one room he himself slept and dwelt, and in the same room instructed from eighty to one hundred little ones; and although the nature of that instruction was, it is true, of a very simple character as regarded earthly learning, yet in prayer, reading, and simple explanation of the Scriptures he ever sought to convey to the hearts of his young charge the fulness of that knowledge which makes wise unto salvation. One little incident is not unworthy of notice. It is told 'that the parents of many who attended his school were very poor, and the little ones were sometimes sent from their homes without a breakfast. If to the inquiry, "Have you had your breakfast, my dear?" the answer should be "No," a portion of the master's humble store—sometimes all he had at hand, it might be the meal intended for himself—was bestowed upon the hungry child."

It is difficult to trace the path of this good school-master without unduly borrowing from the interesting

narrative published by Sir Thomas Phillips ; we must therefore merely say, that he was not only the school-master, earnestly and affectionately tending the lambs, but his heart was of that large character which led him to be a fellow helper with the minister, and made him visit the poor, the suffering, and the sick.

We must pass on to glance at the munificent spirit displayed by this large-hearted man when his attention was arrested by the claims of missions ; and here let us entreat the notice of even some earnest subscribers to the same cause among our wealthy and respectable churches. James Davies determined to contribute twelve shillings yearly, besides subscribing a penny a week and collecting what he could from others. His first year he took to the gentleman who had interested him in the missionary work his twelve shillings, a collection of fifteen shillings, and a subscription of twenty shillings made by the children of his school. He then said, "I have got a trifle more,"—and produced a £5 note. The next year he gave as before, but his trifle of £5 had become £10 ; and the all-sufficient reason he assigned for such an apparently inconsistent generosity was the following, "It is the work of God—can I do too much for him ?"

Not only, however, was his heart set upon his school at home and missions abroad, but he mourned over the desolation in which Kilgwrwg Church was lying ; and he did not rest until by his own entreaties and large contributions, he had restored to a fitter state the building which he revered as the house of God. Can we avoid again drawing a contrast between the conduct of James Davies and that of far too many

rich and well-to-do people, both laymen and clergymen, with respect to many a country church even in our own day? Many a time have we seen with a painful feeling the meanness and neglect in which the sacred building remains or decays year by year, while the mansion and the parsonage betray unequivocal signs of neatness and comfort, or of increasing luxury.

The restoration of the church alluded to having been accomplished, the thoughts of James Davies were anxiously turned towards the erection of a church at the Devauden, in the anxious hope that its ministration might tell upon that desecration of the Sabbath against which he had faithfully lifted up his voice in warning and reproof. At his own expense the school-room at the Devauden was made applicable to the purposes of Divine worship; and not only did he find the funds, but he actually worked with his own hands in the work of preparing the building for its sacred use. Even with this he did not rest satisfied; for feeling a high reverence for the house of God, he could not bear the thought of its being used even for the purposes of a school, and by dint of hard pleading he collected enough to build another room; and the other was entirely set apart for the Sabbath service and sermon, and was at last consecrated.

The following extract from a letter of one who paid the village schoolmaster a visit, will tell powerfully of the way in which the heart and hands of this good man were wholly employed for God:

"The worthy man knows the value of time, and how to turn everything to good account. Not one moment finds him disengaged; when he is not cultivating the

minds of the children, or employed in works of charity and devotion, he is collecting manure from the roads, or tending his pigs, or cultivating his field. . . . On this little farm he raises potatoes and other vegetables, and, in rotation, wheat or barley. Hence he supplies the piggery, which should be enumerated amongst the sources of his revenue. Though this is uncertain in its returns, yet I gathered from him incidentally that in one particular instance he derived from it the profit of £5, *which sum he was anxious to raise and send in aid of the Moravian Missions*; and 'You know, sir,' said he, 'I cannot do much out of my school receipts towards charity if I do not get it by carefully tending my pigs.'"

Let our ministers and contributors to our societies read this, and then reflect upon the amount of their aid, and what it costs them in the shape of self-denying labour and sacrifice. James Davies, in his field and beside his piggery, puts to shame many a minister in his pulpit, and thousands who give their little sums, trifling in comparison with the noble dedication by James Davies of *all* he toiled for. It is deeply interesting to ponder upon the following fact, and to see the anxiety which this excellent man had for all around him:

"Amongst his papers was found an acknowledgment for £15, remitted in one sum in 1837, for a large number of copies of a work called 'Persuasives to Early Piety,' procured by him for gratuitous distribution,—a sum which was equal to the whole of his stipend for three-quarters of a year. Two years afterwards he prevailed upon the author of that work to

publish an essay on 'Parental Care,' by agreeing to purchase 200 copies for gratuitous circulation." It is, however, needless to cull numerous instances of the real munificence with which the heart of this comparatively unknown schoolmaster was filled ; but the insertion of another act of his noble and generous spirit cannot be resisted. Knowing that a particular district was far from any church, he at once put his name down for £10 for that object, and, in the event of its being endowed, he positively offered £20 towards the necessary sum.

A continued biography of James Davies is not the purport of this paper, nor would we trench upon the published labours of the gentleman who has so worthily performed that instructive task ; we shall therefore merely mention, that shortly before the close of life he left Devauden for Llangattack, where he laboured for a short time longer in his blessed work of teaching the little ones of the flock and in ministering to all, both of his scanty substance and his simple but rich stores of Divine love and knowledge. What we have dwelt upon has amply proved both the greatness and the goodness of James Davies ; we must, however, give a clearer and more satisfactory evidence of his sterling piety, wholly separate from party strife and *non-essential* distinctions of creed, from the atmosphere of which the old schoolmaster seemed altogether removed. In doing this we shall still linger a little longer upon the contemplation of this lovely and ancient oak—this tree of the Lord's own planting and watering, and which, like the aged trunk of the forest, seemed to fall at last from the sheer decay of Nature.

In a letter to his niece, written in 1846, he thus manifests his anxiety for the spiritual welfare of his kindred :

"I am very glad to hear from you. How much I esteem and respect you for your most kind assistance to your sister in her affliction and deep distress ! God Almighty will abundantly bless you for it ; he has promised to do so, and His promises will never fail. I am very glad you are so well recovered, and from my heart do I wish you health and every blessing. Poor Hannah has stroke upon stroke ; but I hope and believe it will all end well. If it will be the means of bringing her nearer to Christ it will be a blessed affliction."

Speaking of the same person, he says :

"I beg to assure you I have done everything I could to impress upon her mind the necessity of true religion, of faith in the Lord Jesus, and the necessity of being born again."

But the commencement of a little narrative James Davies published of the last days of his young friend William James, abundantly testifies that his religion was of that heaven-born and heavenward character which fully justifies our calling him an eminent saint of God. Before entering on a description of the character and illness of his young friend, the aged biographer thus writes of himself :

"In looking back on many circumstances that have happened in the course of my life, and that gave me much sorrow and deep affliction at the time of their happening, yet now I can look back upon them all, and rejoice and thank God for every one of them :

they were all necessary, not one too much, and God in mercy permitted me to be exercised by them. For although I hope that when I was young (and it is with deep humility I say it) I had a small measure of the grace of God, yet there was much that was amiss, much that was wanted to be amended—pride, stubbornness, and self-will to be subdued: and perhaps one of the most difficult duties the Christian has to perform, is to set his affections on things above, to wean them from the transitory pleasures of time, and to rely for the accomplishing of this—wholly and solely—on the power of sovereign grace. For many years I have been endeavouring to perform this important duty; yet what am I now?—a poor unworthy sinner. Upon the strictest examination, I find I can place no hope of acceptance with God; no hope of eternal life, for anything I ever did, or what I am doing at the present, or ever hope to do. I feel I am imperfect, sin is mixed with all; my hopes are in the rich, the free, the unmerited mercies of God in Christ Jesus. But lest any person should be led to make a perverse use of the unbounded mercies of the Saviour, and feel easy in their sins, I beg to assure all such, that it is my prayer to God, the desire of my heart, and endeavour of my life to do the will of God, to keep his holy commandments and righteous laws, to hate and detest every sin, all that is hateful and abominable in his pure and holy sight. For how can I hope for any share in the mercies of the Saviour, if I live in the commission of those sins that crucified my Redeemer, and nailed him to the cross, and for the commission of which he has determined *to shut out of*

heaven, and sink into the abyss of eternal and everlasting misery. 'Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say unto me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and in thy name have cast out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity,' Matt. vii. 21—23.

"There is another duty of the Christian, which, from the corruption of our fallen nature, is most difficult and hard to be learned; but when the humble Christian is in possession of it, it brings peace and joy and happiness. This is giving up ourselves *wholly* and *entirely* and *without reserve* to the *disposal* and the *will of Almighty God*. Of all that has happened to me in the course of my long life, nothing has made so deep an impression on my mind, as the leadings of the providence of the Almighty in bringing me to the sick and dying bed of a dear youth. Here I have seen the promises of a faithful God fulfilled; 'They that seek me early shall find me,' and he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. If angels, those holy spirits who had no part in man's redemption, rejoiced at the Saviour's coming into the world to save his lost creatures, and restore them to the favour of God, so that they sang a hymn of praise to the Almighty, surely we have cause to rejoice, when we witness the blessed effects of the Saviour's coming into the world, and his conquest and victory over sin and Satan, the treachery

of the human heart, and the ensnaring world, in the salvation of *one precious soul*."

We feel that we have but glanced at the character and actions of this village schoolmaster ; but we have gathered enough from the records of his life to show that his was a walk and conversation exhibiting so much of the constraining love of Christ and its true accompaniment, the love of his fellow men, that we hold him forth as no mean example of the great and good. His was a humble sphere, and humbly, yet nobly, did he occupy himself in doing the work of his meek and lowly Master among a people who were poor in this world's good, and knew but little of the true riches which the gospel brings with it. James Davies had not many talents entrusted to his care, but those he had he diligently traded with, and the sudden summons he received to meet his Lord found him prepared with such an increase of His gracious gifts as to receive the welcome, "Well done, good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things."

The dismissal of this servant of God was remarkably sudden ; yet did it afford space for the most ample testimony to the reality of his steadfast faith in the only anchor for the immortal soul in its passage from time into eternity. He read with his little family at night the last chapter of the Revelation of St. John, repeating three times the words, "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come ; and let him that is athirst say, Come ; and whosoever will let him take of the water of life freely." The closing apostolical benediction he

then repeated and shut the book : holding the closed book, he repeated several times the words of the 20th verse, "He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly : Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

The next day he met his little school, and for the last time fed the lambs of Christ's flock. Soon after he was taken ill, and in the early part of the following morning, "got out of bed, bathed and wiped his feet without assistance, returned into bed, and was dead in a quarter of an hour."

The only words he seems to have spoken were few but weighty. Amid much pain he said, "A death bed repentance is a poor preparation for eternity. How could I make my peace with God, if I had neglected the concerns of my soul until racked with sickness!" His last words were almost identical with the cry of the humble yet exalted publican:—"God Almighty, pity me;" but his confiding hope and expectation of a triumphant salvation were well expressed in four lines found in the pocket of the waistcoat he last wore.


"Washed, saved, redeemed by God's eternal Son,
His latest moments proved the victory won :
Joyful his spirit soared from earth to raise
Unceasing anthems to his Saviour's praise."

It is interesting to read the respect paid to the memory of this good old man by those who lived around him, and knew his sterling worth and piety. Four of the principal farmers bore James Davies to his grave, the pall was borne by four persons of distinction in the county, and ten clergymen followed the coffin as true mourners for one who had been no ordinary helper

in the work of seeking and feeding the dispersed sheep of Christ.

As we said at the commencement of this sketch, this village schoolmaster was known to comparatively but a few; his was a humble and self-denying occupation throughout life, yet in every thing he did, the fervour of his soul for the advancement of God's glory was manifest, whether he taught babes, planned or built churches, or gave from the very earnings of his bodily toil, for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in heathen lands. His was a repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, which brought forth bright evidences of reality in their fruits, the truest humility, the most entire and self-denying anxiety, and labour for others, and a boundless generosity in the bestowal of his little all for God and man.

All may ponder on the life and character of this Welsh schoolmaster with the utmost profit; to him but little, very little of position, abilities, or worldly wealth was given, yet in all, and with all did he glorify the Giver. It is a question deeply momentous for every reader to consider and answer, What have I received, and what return am I yielding? The command is, "OCCUPY TILL I COME;" James Davies did so, and he was "not ashamed to meet the Lord at His coming."





ELIZABETH FRY.

BORN, 21st MAY, 1780. DIED, 14th OCT. 1845.

NUMEROUS as are the names which England may boast, of those who during the last hundred years have distinguished themselves by their devoted and self-deny-

ing exertions in behalf of the guilty and the wretched, we know of none deserving of greater honour than that of the celebrated lady of whose life and labours of love it is our purpose now to present to our readers a short sketch. The variety and magnitude of the undertakings of a benevolent character in which she was engaged, renders it, however, a difficult task within the space of a few pages to do this in such a way as to interest, and at the same time to do justice to the philanthropist and to the importance of her work.

Elizabeth Fry was born at Norwich, on the 21st of May, 1780. She was the third daughter of John Gurney, Esq., a member of the Society of Friends, as indeed all his family had been from the time of George Fox, their Founder. Her mother was the granddaughter of Robert Barclay, the well known apologist of the Quakers.

Mrs. Gurney appears to have been a person of refined taste and excellent abilities ; she was a devoted mother, and apparently a sincere Christian. Mrs. Fry thus describes her in one of her journals : " My mother, as far as she knew, really trained us up in the fear of the Lord ; my deep impression is, that she was a holy devoted follower of the Lord Jesus ; but that her understanding was not fully enlightened as to the fulness of gospel truth." For twelve years only, however, was she privileged to enjoy the watchful care of a mother to whom she was so tenderly attached, that she tells us, " the thought that she might die and leave me, used to make me weep after I had gone to bed." Much of Elizabeth's childhood was spent in the country, and she thus acquired that taste for rural sights and sounds,

which she retained ever after. Her affections were always strong, but from infancy she manifested a reserved and timid disposition ; indeed fearfulness was a marked feature in her character, whilst at the same time she early showed a great love of enterprise, particularly if the object were of a benevolent nature. Speaking of her childish fears, she tells us, that she "was so much afraid of the dark, and suffered so severely from being left alone without a light after she went to bed, that she believed that her nervous system was injured in consequence of it ; that she once gave up a party of pleasure because there was a gun in the carriage ; and had so great a dread of bathing that the sight of the sea would make her cry."

From infancy her health was delicate, and through life she was liable to severe attacks of illness, often of nervous kind. Her temper was gentle, so that her mother described her as, "her dove-like Betsy," yet she often displayed considerable obstinacy and self-will ; she never loved study, but when young showed great originality of mind. Such was the child who in after years was often to be found alone in the midst of beings so wild and savage, that even strong men shrunk back with horror, scarcely daring to enter the place of their confinement. Her youth was passed in the midst of luxury and domestic enjoyment and happiness. She was one of seven sisters, attached to each other in no common way ; the whole family were in many respects very attractive, possessed of much personal beauty, and great amiability of disposition, united in some members of it with considerable intellectual attainments, and the strong affection which

bound them together was quite remarkable. The society often to be met at Earlham was not, however, generally favourable to the growth of those religious principles which, during her lifetime, Mrs. Gurney had laboured to instil into the minds of her children. Men of talent and remarkable for the extent of their literary and scientific acquirements, were often among the guests there ; but, unhappily, the father of the family does not seem to have been alive to the dangerous character of the religious opinions of many of the learned of that day ; the conversation was therefore frequently such as tended to scepticism and infidelity.

One can scarce restrain a smile at the picture of a Quaker's house, such as Mr. Gurney's presented at this time, but it does not appear to have been by any means singular. Neither music nor dancing were excluded, nor had they any scruple as to the lawfulness of theatrical amusements. In dress, apparently, the ladies of the family, at least, made no difference from that of the rest of the world, except that their style was rather a showy one (we hear of Elizabeth herself riding into Norwich in a scarlet riding habit) ; their mode of speech, also, was not remarkable for any of the peculiarities, by which members of this body are generally known.

As might be expected from all this, we find from some of the first entries in Elizabeth's diary, which she appears to have commenced when very young, that she had no distinct religious opinions of any kind ; in fact, was hardly convinced of the being of a God.

When about seventeen years of age, however, that decided change commenced in her, which from that time continued to progress, slowly, yet steadily and

surely, till she became that bright example of Christianity which we find her, when she became so well known to the world, as the "heroine of Newgate." It was just at this time that William Savery, an American Friend, came over to this country on one of their accustomed religious missions. Norwich was one place visited by him, and there it was, that Elizabeth heard him preach. One of her sisters thus describes the occasion : she says, "On that day we seven sisters sat as usual in a row under the gallery, Betsy was generally rather restless at meeting, and on this day I remember her very smart boots were a great amusement to me ; they were purple, laced with scarlet. At last William Savery began to preach, his voice and manner were arresting, and we all liked the sound ; her attention became fixed ; at last I saw her begin to weep, and she continued a good deal agitated. . . . I have not the same clear remembrance of the afternoon meeting, but the next scene that fastened itself on my memory is our return home in the carriage, Betsy sat in the middle, and astonished us all by the great feeling she showed. She wept most of the way home.

"The next morning William Savery came to breakfast, and preached to our dear sister after breakfast, prophesying of the high and important calling she would be led into. What she went through in her mind, I cannot say, but from that day her love of pleasure and the world were gone." In her own diary we find her writing in her account of this circumstance, which proved the turning point of her life : "*I have felt that there is a God, I have felt devotional, and my mind has been led away from the follies that it is mostly wrapped*

up in." Still it is long before we can discover in the various remarks in her journals on the state of her mind, that she has much acquaintance with the essential doctrines of Christianity; the impressions left by this occurrence seem to have been chiefly that religion was a reality, and not only so, but the only true comfort in life; that death and eternity were realities, for which she must prepare; that it was her duty to love and serve the Lord her God with all her heart, and this she stedfastly resolved to do, although at first entirely in her own strength. Of her own fallen nature she appears to have been entirely ignorant, and although the name of Jesus sometimes occurs, the nature of His work for sinners is hardly hinted at.

About this time she paid a visit to London, and passed the time in the midst of a constant whirl of pleasure and gaiety. She had, however, several opportunities of meeting William Savery, and hearing him preach; and the result of this visit was, that she returned home decided to forsake the world, and enter on a very different life from that which she had hitherto led. And here came in all the evils of the system to which she belonged; for now, instead of seeking a fuller knowledge of those things that pertain unto salvation, in the diligent use of all the means of grace, she was led to expect some palpable and supernatural evidences of the influence of the Holy Spirit on her heart. Isaac Taylor, in his "Natural History of Enthusiasm," has some remarks on this subject, which so well explain what is, we think, the scriptural doctrine of spiritual influence, and so clearly point at the error we refer to, that we cannot refrain from giving a few short extracts.

He says, "If it be true that the agency of the Holy Spirit in renovating the heart is perfectly congruous with the natural movements of the mind, both in its animal and intellectual constitution, it is implied that whatever natural means of suasion, or of rational conviction, are proper to rectify the motives of mankind, will be employed as concomitants or second causes of the change. These exterior and ordinary means of amendment are, in fact, only certain parts of the entire machinery of human nature; nor can it be believed that its Author holds in light esteem His own wisdom of contrivance, or is at any time obliged to break up or to condemn the mechanism which He has pronounced very good. That there actually exists no such intention or necessity, is declared by the very mode and form of revealed religion, for this revelation consists of the common materials of moral influence, argument, history, poetry, eloquence. . . . No persuasion or instruction, we are assured, can of itself in any one instance, avail to penetrate the deathlike indifference of the human mind towards spiritual objects; but when once this torpor is removed by inscrutable grace, then the very feeblest means are sufficient for effecting the renovation of the heart. A single phrase, speaking of judgment to come, lisped by a child, will prove of itself of power to awaken the soul from the slumber of sensual life, if, when the sound falls on the ear, the spirit be quickened from above."

We feel the whole system of Quakerism to be a dangerous, and indeed an unscriptural one; but still we must believe that in the Society of Friends, there are many to be found whom the Lord Jesus will ac-

knowledge amongst those, whom "He calls His friends" at the last great day. We do not profess to understand how they can reject the Sacraments, which ~~we~~ believe to be *generally* necessary to salvation, nor how they can admit the ministry of women, whom St. Paul has forbidden to speak in the church, and as little can we understand their silent mode of worship. Still when we find a Quaker loving the Scriptures, and zealous for their circulation, holding the doctrine of the Trinity *in fact*, though not using the *word*, contending earnestly for the divinity of Christ, and looking for salvation through His finished work alone, and moreover disclaiming any good thing in himself, except what has been inwrought by the sanctifying operation of the Holy Ghost; and farther, when we look to the evidence of his life, and find that, so far as man can judge (and by their fruits we are to know them), he is daily growing in grace, can we refuse to acknowledge such an one to be a member of the church militant on earth, and therefore training up for the church triumphant in heaven? And to all this clearness of faith, and to a most eminent holiness of life, Elizabeth gradually attained. At first seeing very dimly, but persevering in her endeavours after further light, and earnestly striving to keep all the commandments of God, we find in her case the fulfilment of the promise, "If any man will do His will he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God."

The prediction of some of her friends, led her to suppose, that she should one day be called to the work of the ministry, and from this her inmost nature shrank, her great constitutional timidity, added to

the natural feelings of a woman, made the idea terrible to her ; but still, though constantly attending meetings in fear, each time dreading lest the call might come, any misgivings as to whether these calls were real or imaginary, never seem to have entered her mind. She appears to have been at this time, the only serious member of the family, and not to have had any religious friends, except those who were strict, or, as the phrase is, plain Quakers. In after life, her brothers and sisters, one after another, renounced the worldly life which they had hitherto led, and most of them left the Society of Friends, and joined the Church of England : one of her sisters was married to Samuel Hoare, Esq., another to the Rev. Francis Cunningham, and another to Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton ; and although Elizabeth herself was constantly in the habit of associating with Christians of all denominations, her attachment to her own Society instead of becoming at all weakened, seemed to continue firm and decided until her death. In pondering on her eventful life, the question constantly presents itself—how was it, that notwithstanding the inconsistency of her public ministry with the plain direction of the word of God, so evident a blessing rested on her labours ? We believe that when a real child of God falls into any error through ignorance, or through the frailty of our nature, although this error may in no wise bring into doubt his own personal piety, yet the blessing is withheld from his labours. Take for example the education of children, how often do we find the children of pious parents turning out badly, and the fault may always, we think, be traced to some error in

the training, arising frequently from some mistaken notions on the part of the parents.

It is then apparently the general rule that when a work is performed in faith, and *according* to the will of God, and only then, the blessing will descend either now or hereafter. What was the reason for the deviation from this rule, in the present case, we cannot tell. God is a sovereign, "He giveth no account of His dealings with the children of men." It seems to us, however, that there was a great work to be done in the bringing to light, and in the reformation of the enormous evils which then existed in the prison discipline throughout the land. Howard had done much; but the French war had, in a great measure, prevented the good that might have been expected as a result of his efforts; added to which, we believe that there was very little of the religious element mixed with them. Now, to cause a speedy and universal movement in this direction, one cannot imagine a person better fitted in person, station, education, and character, than the subject of the present sketch. There was something so novel and singular in the enterprise, particularly as undertaken by a woman; and there was something so attractive in herself, that public attention was arrested in an extraordinary degree. The thing came into notice at once, whilst her deep piety led her, so decidedly to mingle Christian instruction with all her efforts, for the temporal good of those in whom she was so deeply interested, that the movement became quite a religious one. At the same time, none but a Quaker lady, in her character of a minister, could have given this instruction, in the public way which

she did on various occasions, nor could any lady have done it without creating a feeling of disgust in the minds of the audience, except one who, like her, being naturally timid and retiring, would doubtless show by her manner, that it was done contrary to her own inclinations. The Lord brings good out of evil, and in this case that which was certainly objectionable in itself (although performed under a sense of duty), was evidently overruled for the salvation of many.

One other idea strikes us on this subject;—the Church of England, and other denominations of Christians, had been raised from the dead state into which they had fallen, through the ministrations of those devoted men who had of late appeared amongst them ; might it not be, that Elizabeth's strong attachment to the Society of Friends, may have been permitted in order that she might be the means of stirring up and enlivening that body of Christians ?

We must now proceed to give some account of the principal events of her life, confining ourselves chiefly to those connected with her especial work. Benevolence, we have said, was always a marked feature in her character ; when not more than seventeen or eighteen years of age, we find her spending great part of her time in visiting the poor, in working for them and instructing them. She had for some time a school, in which at last there were more than seventy scholars, whom she taught without any assistance, even without monitors ; such was the power she possessed of influencing the minds of even the most unruly.

In the month of August, 1800, Elizabeth Gurney became the wife of Joseph Fry, and removed with

him to St. Mildred's-court, in the City of London. Her marriage brought her into connection with those, who, in religious matters, were more like-minded with herself than were her own friends at that time; for Mr. Fry's family were all "plain Friends." She had, herself, gradually adopted the peculiarities of dress and speech used by that sect; not, as she said, because she looked upon these little things as of the same importance which many consider them, but she thought them safe-guards for her, as marking her separation from the world. That there should be a visible difference, between the children of this world, and the children of light, we firmly believe; and we are persuaded, that this distinction is too much lost sight of in the present day; most young persons, particularly, are so afraid of using any expression that may be called "cant," and have also very often such an exaggerated fear of putting themselves too forward, that they never avow their principles at all; and will meet, sometimes even daily, their companions in study or business, without ever saying a word in acknowledgment of their Master; forgetting that they are to be *soldiers*, as well as servants of Him, who has bought them with His own blood. But no amount of "cant religious phrases," used by those whom we may occasionally meet, can be any excuse for running into the opposite extreme of reserve; and the danger is surely far greater in our times of acting a cowardly part in this holy cause, than of doing it an injury by indiscreet zeal; and the injury to others and to ourselves, arising from this sort of conduct, is incalculable. What can the impression on the minds of the irreligi-

ous be, but that after all religion is not a thing of such very great importance, or, at least, that we do not think it so. And, oh, if when standing beside some friend, whom we feel assured, has no such hope of immortality as we possess, we were just to cast our thoughts forward to that great day, when we shall meet before our common Judge, and consider too, that till that tremendous time, perhaps we may *never* meet again, could we act thus cruelly? Then, again, the loss to ourselves is far greater than we think; this is often the reason, doubtless, why our views are obscure, our hopes dim, and our prayers unanswered. "He that watereth others shall be watered himself," says the Scripture; and we must not think, that we are at liberty always, to choose in what way this shall be done. We may not say, I am engaged in such or such a work of mercy, therefore I fulfil this command, but must rather follow the leadings of God's providence, and whenever an opportunity comes before us of speaking to any of the things belonging to their salvation, we must not let it pass.

But whilst we do desire earnestly, to see a more decided separation, between Christians and the world, it is not by any such outward marks as are adopted by the Society of Friends; rather should we wish that these might be avoided. Would we but take up the cross appointed for us, we should find it quite as much as we can bear, without drawing down upon ourselves any more of the ridicule of the world. The distance between us, is already as great as heaven is from earth; and how it can be either widened, or made more manifest, by the use of one pronoun instead of another, or

by wearing any particular dress, we cannot comprehend. Still, in Mrs. Fry's case, and doubtless in many others, the scruple was a conscientious one, although, as we believe, unfounded and unnecessary.

The difference in her mode of life after her marriage and removal to London was considerable. Having a very large establishment of servants to manage, and an extensive circle of friends, her time was no longer her own, and for some years she does not appear to have had much leisure to visit the poor; but yet the inclination constantly showed itself, and she was never so happy, as when seeking out and striving to benefit, some distressed case which had come before her. Her means were ample, and she never could bear any one to go away from her house unrelieved.

It was not till about ten years after her union with Mr. Fry that she commenced speaking in meetings; during this time she devoted herself almost exclusively to her domestic duties, endeavouring to acquit herself well in every relation of life. She had eleven children, to whom she proved a most devoted and anxious mother, but excelled principally in her management of them whilst little. She had a remarkably winning manner with very young children, and was always sure to gain their affection.

She had also a strong sense of her responsibility as a mistress, and was very solicitous for the happiness, and especially for the spiritual welfare of her servants, liberal and indulgent in her treatment of them, and anxious to make them her friends. Towards her father, and brothers, and sisters her attachment continued unabated to the end of her life; to some of

the younger ones she in a great measure supplied a mother's place ; and although it was a great trial and disappointment to her, that so many of them left the Society, this never made any difference in her affection for them. Indeed, whilst holding her own opinions very strongly, she displayed no want of sympathy with those who differed from her, but rather evinced a cordial affection for all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

In the year 1809, Mr. and Mrs. Fry removed from Mildred's-court, and fixed their residence at Plashet House, Essex. This change, so congenial to Mrs. Fry's natural taste for a country life, contributed greatly to her comfort and enjoyment, and here she immediately began to form plans, for the improvement of the condition of the poor around her. About half a mile from Plashet there was quite a colony of Irish, living in their usual state of poverty and wretchedness, and amongst these she would constantly be found, wending her way in the midst of ragged children and pigs, up broken staircases, and along narrow passages, administering comfort to the sick, counsel and instruction to all, and trying to persuade them to send their children to school. She distributed Bibles amongst them also, strange to say, unopposed by the priest, who does not seem to have been a very strict Papist, but was really interested in their welfare ; so that, instead of resisting her efforts, he seemed quite to rejoice in the influence which "Madam Fry" had obtained over his wild flock.

There was also another set of people who excited much interest in her mind—a party of gipsies who

yearly pitched their tents in that neighbourhood for a few days on their way to Fairlop Fair. For the relief of these two sets of people, she kept by her a large store of warm clothes, medicine, Bibles, and tracts, and she accustomed her children, while very young, to assist her in her various works of mercy.

The Bible Society had always a warm place in her heart. She was present at the formation of the Norwich Association, when her brother Joseph John Gurney first came forward in that cause which he ever after so warmly advocated. We insert here a few lines from the pen of Mr. Hughes, the well-known Secretary of the Bible Society, descriptive of a scene which took place on this occasion at Earlham. "Our hosts and hostesses were the Gurneys, chiefly Quakers, who, together with their guests, amounted to thirty-four. A clergyman, at the instance of one of the family, and I presume with the cordial concurrence of the rest, read a portion of the Scriptures morning and evening, and twice we had prayers ; I should have said thrice, for after dinner on the day of the meeting, the pause, encouraged by the Society of Friends, was succeeded by a devout address to the Deity by a female minister, Elizabeth Fry, whose manner was so impressive, and whose words were so appropriate, that none present can ever forget the incident, or can ever advert to it without emotions alike powerful and pleasing. The first emotion was surprise ; the second, awe ; the third, fervour. . . . The days passed with this excellent family were opened with joy and closed with regret ; few such days will ever occur again."

In the year 1813, Elizabeth Fry paid a religious

visit to the monthly meetings, this being a custom among Friends : it was in the course of this visit that she first entered those walls where she was afterwards so frequent a visitor. She writes of this :—"Yesterday we were some hours at Newgate with the poor female felons, attending to their outward necessities ; we had been twice previously. Before we went away, dear Anna Buxton uttered a few words in supplication, and very unexpectedly to myself, I did so too. I heard weeping, and thought they appeared much tendered, a very solemn quiet was observed ; it was a striking scene, the poor people on their knees around us, in their deplorable condition." At this period the state of things in Newgate was miserable in the extreme ; there was no classification of the prisoners, but tried and untried, those guilty of the most heinous crimes, and those confined only for misdemeanours, were together, sleeping, cooking, and washing, in the same room, often almost destitute of clothing, for which there was no provision. Even for food they were in great measure dependent on their friends, spirits were openly drunk, and, in fact, were regularly supplied to those who could pay for them from a tap *in the prison*. The most fearful language assailed the ear ; the place was commonly known by the name of "hell above ground ;" so that the governor even entered this part with reluctance, and advised the ladies to leave their watches at his house, fearing that they would be snatched from their sides. The scenes witnessed here made a deep impression on the mind of Mrs. Fry, and although all that was then done was to supply clothing to the most destitute, they were never

effaced from her recollection ; and the result was, that four years after, she united with a few other heroic ladies, in that systematic effort which has been so remarkably successful. During these four intervening years, however, she had to pass through many trials ; in her own illnesses, and in much sickness in her family ; in the loss of a sweet little girl between four and five years of age ; in the death of her brother, John Gurney ; and in that of her beloved friend, J. G. Bevan, Esq. ; in considerable loss of property ; and in separation from several of her elder children.

Public attention was beginning to be awakened to the enormous evils arising from the bad discipline that prevailed, in almost all the prisons of Great Britain, and Mrs. Fry's own interest in the subject was kept alive, by the conversation of two of her brothers-in-law, who were at this time attempting to form a society, for the reformation of juvenile depredators, who infested London in gangs ; and for the purpose of gaining the information necessary to the success of their plans, frequently visited various prisons. About Christmas of 1816, Mrs. Fry again visited Newgate, and having formed a little association of those of her friends who were willing to assist her in this work, she commenced her operations there in real earnest. The zeal and perseverance displayed by these devoted ladies was extraordinary, they would often spend hours in the midst of these poor women, either going without their dinners or just taking something with them to eat there. Mrs. Fry was, however, quite the principal mover in all these schemes : when she first went she desired to be left alone with the prisoners,

and having read and explained the 20th of St. Matthew to them, she began to talk to them in her own kind and persuasive way, of their miserable condition, and of the wretched state of their children ; all being produced by their own misconduct. She speedily gained their confidence and affection, and when she proposed to establish a school amongst them, into which all under five-and-twenty might be admitted, they readily agreed, and a governess was selected from among themselves, who conducted herself so well that she afterwards obtained a free pardon ; she did not, however, live long to enjoy it, but soon after died very happily, rejoicing in that hope which can enlighten even the dark valley.

When the school was commenced, the numbers who desired to attend were so great that the room could not contain them all, and some were obliged to be excluded. Order was established in the course of a short time ; but at first their conduct was so boisterous that one of the ladies who frequently took the instruction for a time, tells us, that she felt as if shut up in a den of wild beasts.

A remarkable instance of the blessing vouchsafed to these labours may be mentioned here. Mrs. Pryor, one of the little band of labourers, relates having seen on one of her visits, a woman come out of the prison-door yelling like a wild beast, and rush round the yard tearing the caps from the heads of the other women. This person became quite gentle, she obtained her liberty, married, and used frequently to go to see her benefactress, looking very respectable, and apparently a well-behaved woman.

The scenes which Mrs. Fry witnessed here, were, as may be imagined, heartrending. Executions were not then the rare occurrences which they now are, for death was at that time the penalty for many crimes besides murder ; she was therefore often called to visit persons whose lives were soon to be forfeited. At various periods in her life she made strenuous efforts through the influence she possessed, to get the laws altered ; of course, as a Quaker, she did not think it lawful to inflict the punishment of death for any crime, however heinous.

After her different plans had been tried for some weeks, she invited the sheriffs and some of the corporation of London to come and witness the effects. Their astonishment at what had been done was great, and she had no difficulty in obtaining their consent and hearty concurrence in all that was going on. She then proposed that certain rules, for the conduct and restraint of the women, should be adopted in presence of these officers. They were accordingly put to the vote and unanimously adopted by the prisoners. Her next step was to procure work for them, for she felt that without employment, all her efforts would be vain. A large house in Fenchurch-street, had hitherto supplied all the articles to be sent to Botany-bay ; she immediately went to them, and requested that they would relinquish this branch of their business, in favour of her protégées ; they generously agreed to do so, and thus her object was gained ; and that which is so often in similar cases found to be a constant source of trouble and anxiety, was settled at once.

The change thus effected in Newgate could not

remain secret, it was soon talked of amongst all classes and frequently noticed in the newspapers, so that the prison was often thronged with visitors, and even those who had previously been most hopeless of any possibility of improvement there, could not resist the evidence which they saw in the altered behaviour of the women. Mrs. Fry was called to give her evidence before the House of Commons, being now considered as the person of all others most qualified to give her opinion on the difficult subject of prison discipline.

She soon became much interested in the state of the convict ships, for she could not but look with anxiety on the future prospects of those who had often been some time under her management, and her active spirit set to work to find employment, and some means of instruction for them during their long and dreary voyage. It had long been a custom amongst the prisoners of Newgate, before their removal to the ships, to do as much mischief as was possible, breaking and destroying everything that came in their way ; and on their road to the ships they would shout and behave in a most boisterous manner. Having obtained a promise from those now under her superintendence that they would conduct themselves quietly, she obtained leave to substitute hackney coaches for the open waggons which had formerly been used. She visited them when on board ship, got them arranged in classes under the charge of monitors, and obtained large supplies of materials for patchwork, and various kinds of fancy work ; having heard that those articles could be quickly disposed of in New South Wales.

The last time Mrs. Fry was on board the ship which

then lay at Deptford, a scene took place which could not easily be forgotten by any who witnessed it. The poor convicts were ranged on the quarter-deck ; whilst she stood at the cabin door, attended by the Captain and her friends. Amid the most profound silence, she took out her Bible, and read a chapter. The deepest feeling was displayed, even the sailors mounted the rigging, and those on the surrounding vessels leant over to catch the tones of her clear sweet voice. The usual pause followed, and then she knelt down, and entreated a blessing on those, who were so soon to bid farewell to their native shores. Many of the poor creatures wept bitterly ; and all followed her with their eyes and blessings, until the boat which conveyed her to the shore was out of sight. Can we wonder that she should say of these labours, among the very outcasts of society, that they had brought with them a greater peace, than she had ever known in any other work which she had undertaken ?

The information she had frequently communicated to her, with regard to the penal settlements in Australia, was, however, to the last degree discouraging, and she learned to her great grief, that when these poor women were put on shore, there was no provision whatever for any sort of shelter for them ; rations there were certainly, but when night came, not so much as a hut to lie down in. How disheartening this intelligence must have been, to one who had been spending her strength, for those whose situation seemed now to preclude the hope, that much permanent good could be expected to result, we can easily imagine ; and as one of the Chaplains out there, wrote to her, that he had been en-

deavouring for twenty years, to get this crying evil remedied, but without success, the case seemed desperate.

It was not long after the occurrence at Deptford, that she undertook a journey into Scotland, in company with her brother Joseph John Gurney, which, although the object was primarily a religious one, they also made subservient to the object which so much occupied their thoughts, by visiting all the prisons that lay in their way, and had the satisfaction of knowing that ladies' committees were soon after formed, in various parts of the country, and that much interest was awakened. A correspondence was also opened between Mrs. Fry and the Princess Sophia Mestchersky, who took the lead in some similar efforts at St. Petersburg.

In all these labours she was much encouraged by her brothers and various members of her own and her husband's family, who were always ready to assist her, whenever pecuniary means were wanting. The interest of many of the excellent of the earth was, as might be expected, deeply excited in her behalf. Mrs. Hannah More often greatly encouraged her, and at one time sent her a copy of her "Practical Piety," in which she found a poetical inscription to herself on the first page.

She had, nevertheless, many trials: people talked of the manner in which her family was neglected, whilst she was travelling about attending to the prisons; and her own children, as they grew up, could not understand how these long absences, were consistent with her duties as a mother. Whatever our own opinion on this subject may be, this we must say, that she never seems to have left home, without making the most careful arrangements, for the comfort of her house-

hold, generally getting one of her own sisters to take her place. And whether the act was right or wrong, she never had any doubt in her own mind, as to the path she ought to take ; nor does it appear to have ever been her own choice, but always a sense of duty, which was her guide in all her actions.

On one occasion she spent five months in Ireland with one of her brothers ; visiting a great part of the island, holding large religious meetings, inspecting prisons, and establishing societies similar to her own in Newgate. At Galway she held a meeting, in the assembly rooms, consisting of three hundred persons, numbers of whom were Romanists. In her journal, written after a fit of illness, caused by the great fatigue and exertion which she had undergone, she thus notices the scenes through which she had passed : "The great numbers who followed us, almost wherever we went, was one of those things, that I believe, was too much for me. No one can tell, but those who have been brought into similar circumstances, what it is, to feel as I did at times ; often weak and fagged in body, exhausted in mind, having things of importance to direct my attention to, and not less than a multitude around me, each expecting a word or some mark of attention. For instance, on one occasion, a General on one side, and a Bishop on the other, and perhaps sixty other persons all expecting something from me ; visiting prisons, lunatic asylums and infirmaries, each institution exciting feeling, and requiring judgment. I endeavoured to seek for help from above, and for a quiet mind, and my desire was that such time should not be lost upon those persons. They ended frequently in religious opportu-

nities, and many came in consequence to our public meetings; these things proved too much for me, and tired me more than any part of our service."

On her return from this journey, a succession of trials awaited her; first, the illness and death of her favourite sister Rachel, and of an aunt; then a second very considerable loss of property, caused by the failure of one of the houses of business, with which Mr. Fry was concerned; so that they were obliged to leave Plashet, and reside for a time at Mildred's-court with their son William. This deep trial served, however, to show how deeply she was beloved, and drew forth the sympathies of her friends in a wonderful manner. Then she had a severe illness herself, and sickness in her family; and no sooner was she recovered, than she was called on to act a nurse's part to several sick friends. This was an office in which she displayed great skill. Her niece describes it as having been "peculiar indeed; her very presence and aspect as perfectly calming, possessing an authority mixed with a soothing tenderness, which gave her a most helpful power, quieting both mind and body by her judicious and always indulgent advice, and her unfailing power of hoping, perhaps, too well." She speaks of her also as condescending to the humblest services, recalls her soft hand, her exquisite reading, and delicious company, concluding by saying, "Oh that we could hear her, see her, feel her, once more."

After a while, Mr. and Mrs. Fry settled themselves in a small house in Upton-lane, where they were near Mr. Samuel Gurney's residence at Ham. The trial of leaving Plashet, where they had passed so many years,

and of parting with old servants, was a very bitter one ; but Mrs. Fry meekly bowed to the painful dispensation, and proved herself in suffering as well as in doing the Lord's will, one of those with whom tribulation worketh patience. She began to occupy herself much in writing a little Text-book, of which, when finished, she gave away thousands, and which has proved useful to very many. One, bound in red leather, was given by her to a little grandson, whose name she had written in it. The child let it fall out of his pocket, and although grieving much for the loss of grandmamma's present, could not recover it. The book was, however, picked up by the child of a notorious poacher, who carried it home to his mother's ; she read it, very likely from no other motive than curiosity, for she was no better than her husband ; but whatever may have been the inducement, it was blessed to her true conversion, and when a year after, the clergyman was sent for, to visit her on her death bed, the medical man said, " You will find the lion changed into a lamb."

Few persons, we should suppose, have been made to pass through greater alternations of joys and sorrows, of exaltation and humiliation, than the subject of these pages, particularly at this period of her life, when deaths among her friends and relatives, and sorrows of various kinds, came quickly one upon another ; while, at the same time, she was made much of, by the great and noble, and prospered in many of her cherished schemes. At one time we find her admitted to an interview with the Duchess of Kent and the then Princess Victoria ; next comes an in-

visitation to visit the Duchess of Gloucester, then a meeting and introduction to the Queen and several royal dukes and duchesses, on some public occasion. But still, whether in joy or sorrow, her mind was constantly on the look out, for opportunities of doing good ; and when in company with the great and honourable, she always strove to interest them in benevolent objects, now speaking on the subject of slavery, at that time so much discussed amongst all classes ; then of schools or Bible Societies ; but oftener of prisons or lunatic asylums, these being the objects that chiefly occupied her attention. Whilst, however, her mind was thus engaged in large and important schemes for benefiting her fellow creatures, it did not turn away from little every day matters as beneath her notice. Her own household, her own children, friends, and servants, were ever the first objects of her care ; and the poor around her at Upton-lane, as formerly at Plashet, were most anxiously watched, instructed, and relieved ; and she was fearful herself, and often warned her friends of the danger, while the mind is occupied in improving large institutions for the punishment of crime or the relief of misery, of being the means of adding to the number of their inmates, by negligence in the management of those under their care ; and felt strongly, how very much the conduct of the higher classes must influence that of the lower, “ by the want of a religious example ; by not instructing servants in the right way ; by not keeping the Sabbath strictly ; by very late hours, and attending public places of amusement ; by vanity in dress ; by *hurrying dressmakers and milliners*, and so causing

them to oppress their young women ; by not paying bills themselves, or through some confidential person, but trusting them to young and untried servants, thus leading to dishonesty on their part, or on that of the tradespeople ; by allowing their maid-servants to begin to wash at unseasonable hours, and so requiring ardent spirits to support them."

In 1833 she paid a visit to the islands of Jersey, Guernsey, and Sark, and was greatly delighted with the lovely and picturesque country scenes to be found there, and also with the simple, industrious peasantry. Here she might often have been found seated in their curious little cottages, beside the sea weed fires ; or at other times in the prison, the hospital, or the work-house ; and finding that none of the recent improvements had found their way across the channel, she addressed a letter to the managers on the subject. Here she also established a District Visiting Society, and often after her return home she received most pleasing intelligence of the usefulness of her labours there.

Another object which at one time engaged much of her attention, was a plan for the establishment of libraries for all the Coast-guard stations in the kingdom. There were then five hundred of these ; a large sum was therefore required, and she proposed that £1,000 should be raised by subscription, and that Government should add £500. This grant, after a little time, she obtained. The rest of the money was raised chiefly through her influence, and most of the arrangements of the details were also left to her. Many journeys had of course to be undertaken, and much labour was involved, so that the carrying out of this plan would have

occupied most persons for a long period. It was one of her principal talents, however, to be able to see to the very bottom of a thing at once, and to know almost instantly how a plan could be best and quickest effected, so that she was enabled to accomplish this in a wonderfully short space of time. She had an opportunity of visiting many of the stations along the south coast of England, in the course of a journey which her husband undertook on business, and in which she accompanied him. At Portsea, also, she went to the Penitentiary, and inquiring into the conduct of the inmates, two were pointed out as particularly hardened. Taking no notice of this, she sat down and addressed them all ; then rising to go, she went up to these two, and taking each by the hand, said, "I trust I shall hear better things of thee." Both the young women, quite overcome by the kindness of her manner, burst into tears. So frequently we find her going from one place to another on her various errands of mercy, that we may well say of her, as St. Paul said of himself, "In journeyings oft." A second visit to Jersey, another to the north of England and Scotland, then a very long tour on the continent, followed this visit to the southern coast.

Then the scene is changed, and we find her holding bazaars in aid of some of her societies, in which she is assisted by many of her children and grandchildren. Nothing was too great for her, if she believed herself called to it by her heavenly Father, or too small, if likely to be the means of doing good. To fancy sales, in general, she was not a friend ; but when conducted in a quiet, unobtrusive manner, she gladly availed herself

of their assistance to swell the funds of her numerous societies, in a great measure dependent on her exertions, as to her they had owed their existence. Our beloved Queen took great interest in her various undertakings. She had several interviews with her, and on one occasion, sent her £50 for one of her refuges. Mrs. Fry at one time, took an opportunity of pressing on her notice, the suffering state of the old Waldensian churches.

We have an interesting account of her interview, with the widowed Duchess of Orleans on her second visit to France. In a larger and more magnificent room than even she had ever seen before, she sat in the presence of the lovely young widow and her stepmother, the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburgh, who each had a Bible in her hand. Mrs. Fry conversed with them, read and commented, speaking of the right use of affliction, and of its blessed fruits. She did not shrink from urging the importance of a Scriptural, and Protestant education for the two little ones, one of whom, as they then thought, would, in all probability, succeed to the throne of France. For an hour and a half the conversation lasted, and the Grand Duchess of Mecklenburgh, who was a very devoted Christian, entered with deep interest into all that was said. One can only lament, that the hopes then entertained, of the real Protestant principles of the Duchess of Orleans, should have been so blighted, and that both these children should have been educated in the Romish faith.

During this visit to France, Mrs. Fry had also several conversations with M. Guizot, in which she freely spoke of the necessity for a diffusion of scriptural truth in France, and for an education for the

people based on the Scriptures, urging that the circulation of the Bible was the only means capable of controlling the power of sin, and shedding light upon the darkness of superstition and infidelity. She also fearlessly pressed on him, the state of the Sandwich isles, having been entreated by the king, Kamehameha III., to do her utmost to second his endeavours to prevent the introduction of spirituous liquors into his kingdom. By Louis Philippe himself she was sent for, and the queen, who was present during the interview, afterwards sent her a Bible containing very fine engravings, in token of the pleasure she had received from her visit.

Her remarkable life was now drawing to a close ; she had for some time been in bad health, and she now returned to England, not at all benefited by the change of air and scene. She only undertook one other religious mission, and that a short one. Her illness continued to increase, and her sufferings were at times excessive, both in body and mind ; greater, she told her children, than any one knew ; but her faith did not fail, and she constantly said, "I feel the foundation underneath me sure." She also remarked, that religious truth was opened and supplied to her inwardly, not by man's ministration, but according to her need ; adding, "If I may so say, it is my life." She was moved from place to place, and nursed with greatest tenderness ; but all was of no avail ; her race was nearly run, and it was soon to be said to her, "Well done, good and faithful servant ; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

She lingered, notwithstanding, some months ; and during that time, had to pass through a time of perhaps greater affliction, than she had ever known.

Within that short space, *seven* of those nearest and dearest to her, were removed by death.

Amongst these her sister-in-law, who had been a very dear sister and friend to her, whose health had been for some time declining, entered into her rest a very short time before her ; she also was named Elizabeth Fry, and was a minister, like herself. Scarlet fever broke out in her son William's house, and first carried off the youngest of his little ones, then himself, and a few days after his eldest little girl ; all the other children, and several of the servants, having it also. Only two months before, this very son had accompanied his mother to the Plaistow meeting, which she had earnestly desired to attend once more.

Let no one imagine, that her many public engagements had rendered her less keenly sensible of these heavy strokes. Far indeed was she from exhibiting anything of that stoicism, which probably many ascribe to her, with regard to her own family ; she was almost crushed by these repeated blows, weeping nearly constantly, while, at the same time, her patient submission was a continual exemplification of what was evidently the feeling of her soul : "It is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good ; though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

The nature of her complaint was for a long time almost unknown. She often suffered from neuralgic symptoms ; but whenever there was a little respite, she was always ready to be interested in anything, which her friends had devised, for her relief and comfort. Her love of children continued unabated ; up to the very last she delighted to have some of her little grand-

children, or nephews and nieces, with her. Little Willie Fry was accustomed to read the Bible to her every morning on her first awakening; and she would take the greatest interest in trying to lead his infant mind to that Saviour who was so precious to her.

Her youngest son, shortly before her death, was united in marriage to a member of the Society of Friends; and this was a great pleasure to her, for it had ever been one of her greatest disappointments that so few of her children remained in the Society. She took a warm interest in the event, and exerted herself to celebrate the return of the young couple to Upton, in the last family gathering at which she was able to be present. Thus, up to the very last, she lived for others.

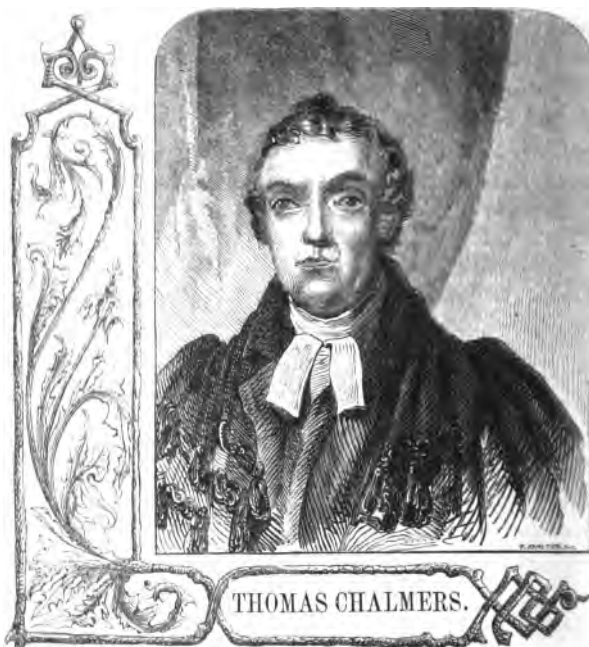
Immediately after, she was moved to Ramsgate, this being her last journey; and here, when able to be drawn out in a Bath chair, she would distribute tracts among the seamen. Her interest in all in which she had formerly been engaged, remained unabated, and she anxiously inquired after the welfare of the Coast-guard libraries. She was able also to attend the little meeting at Draper's, about four miles from Ramsgate; and spoke in a very impressive way on the subject of death, saying that she believed that was the eleventh hour to some present. Very shortly after a new symptom, which caused much increase of suffering, showed itself; this was acute pain in the head. She frequently fell when attempting to move from her sofa to her chair; grew rapidly worse, and a few days closed the scene. She had always had an extreme dread of death, shrinking from the struggle with the

last enemy; but during her illness, although she frequently referred to this natural timidity, she would always add, "Remember, if I never wake again, I am safe." She was mercifully preserved from any knowledge of this struggle, being perfectly insensible for some time previously.

We have thus endeavoured to lay before our young readers a few particulars of the life of this eminent saint, who proved herself so faithful a servant and *soldier* of Jesus Christ, in whose service she had worn herself out, and in whose service she died at the age of sixty-five, falling asleep, may we not say, with her armour on? If you, also, have enlisted under the same blessed leader, remember that you are to fight. If you wish to be a happy Christian, if you wish to enjoy much of the presence of Christ, and to have the earnest of the Spirit in your heart that you are a child of God, there are two things that you must do; you must be decided, and you must be active. It may be that you are too young at present to engage in many things, but you cannot be so young as to find an excuse for being idle. Now is the time to *educate* yourself for taking a more active part in a little while. A great deal depends on this—try to take an interest in all the various plans for doing good, that are sure to come before you in these active times; never allow yourself to say, I cannot do this or that. Now is the time to learn; we have no right to say, as so many do, I hate collecting for societies, or I have no taste for teaching, or I am not fitted for visiting the poor. These things may be learnt, and the tastes may be acquired; and would be, if we thought more of the

value of immortal souls, and if we always recollected, too, that "we are not our own," and therefore have no right to choose our own employments.

Those only who have engaged heart and soul in this blessed service, can know the happiness of it. Sorrows and trials they expect, whilst they are still pilgrims here ; but the prize to be won makes the cross seem light.



BORN, MARCH 17, 1780. DIED, MAY 30, 1847.

"Lives of great men all remind us
We may make our lives sublime,
And, departing, leave behind us
Footprints in the sands of time."

IN a sequestered but fertile valley near the coast of Fifeshire, lies the parish of Kilmany. Of limited extent—its length being six and its width about four miles—it contains a purely agricultural population, not

numbering—at least fifty years ago—more than one hundred and fifty families. To the pastoral charge of this parish, a minister was at that time appointed, whose pulpit ministrations and private habits were the occasion of no little wonderment to his rustic parishioners. If great mental capacity and varied erudition, warm emotions, and a frank and guileless bearing, were the only and all-important qualifications for a village pastor, they would have had abundant reason to congratulate themselves. But, alas! a more endearing tie was wanting. Upon his fresh and nature-loving spirit, the sloping hills, and peaceful valleys, and rustic homesteads of his new fold, made the liveliest impression; but “the flock, the beautiful flock”—their immortal interests and eternal destinies—struck no responsive chord in that pastor’s heart,—at least, none at all adequate to their infinite importance. How to “seek out the sheep in the cloudy and dark day,” he knew not; neither had he any experience in leading the wanderer to “green pastures,” or “beside the waters of comfort.” “I find you aye busy, about one thing or another,” said one of his more privileged parishioners, admitted to some terms of intimacy; “but come when I will, I never find you at your studies for the Sabbath.” “Oh, an hour or two on the Saturday evening is quite enough for that,” was the minister’s reply. “He could aver,” from the highest of all authority, the authority of his own experience—and he made the statement public in a pamphlet published about this time—“that after the satisfactory discharge of parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure, for the prosecution of any science in which his taste

may dispose him to engage." It is true, he visited from house to house, moving about, to adopt a favourite phrase of his own, "with his affections flying before him," making kindly inquiries, and showing tender sympathy, and administering needful aid. He made himself acquainted with every house, and familiar at every fireside. But little solicitude was manifested as to the religious condition of the inmates—no references were made to their state and prospects for eternity—and it was only when specially requested, that he ever engaged in prayer. It is again most true, that limited as was his preparation for the pulpit, his sermons were delivered with energetic and persuasive eloquence. They were, moreover, a faithful manuscript of all his opinions. With single-minded simplicity of character, he never kept back any part of his own creed, neither did he inculcate upon others what he did not himself heartily believe; and, as a necessary result, he was restrained by no fear of unpopularity from publicly and vehemently decrying the "evangelical system," which he so heartily despised. "Let us, my brethren," he would say, "beware of such errors. Let us view such fanatical vagaries with the contempt they deserve, and walk in the certain path marked out to us by reason, and by Scripture;" and then bending over the pulpit, and putting on the books named the strong emphasis of dislike, he would add, "*Many books* are favourites with you, which, I am sorry to say, are *no favourites* of mine. When you are reading 'Newton's Sermons,' and 'Baxter's Saint's Rest,' and 'Doddridge's Rise and Progress,' where do Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John go to?" But what, then, was his religious system?

So far as he had any, it seems to have been the theory of a mitigated law—the atonement of Jesus Christ being regarded as supplementary to deficient virtue. Fervid denunciations against particular vices, and the inculcation of opposite virtues, formed the subject matter of his sermons. He was, “in fact,” to adopt his own account of the matter in after days, “nothing more than a Deist, excepting in a kind of tenderness for some tenets, and a reversionary outlook for final happiness.”

Cursory, however, and unsatisfactory as was the discharge of ministerial duty, it was obvious enough that neither the thoughts nor the time of the minister were unoccupied. The dreamy abstraction of his countenance indicated that. Such was indeed sometimes his absorption in some engrossing process of thought, that, as we have been credibly informed, it has been necessary to despatch a servant after him on Sunday morning, to remind him what day it was, and that the bells were chiming for church—both circumstances having so entirely escaped his recollection, that he had sallied forth for his usual morning’s walk. Ever and anon one or another of the villagers would meet him, and receive the kindest smile of recognition, but it was instantly exchanged for the more fixed habit of moody thought; and then they would gaze after him with increased astonishment, and finally conclude that he was addicted to some very strange, if not very questionable pursuits.

To understand his character and habits at this time more completely, we must now take a glance at his earlier history.

Thomas Chalmers was the fourth son of Mr. John Chalmers, of Anstruther, in Fifeshire, at which place he was born, on March 17th, 1780. His earlier years were not marked by any precocity of intellectual development, or rapid educational progress; but they did not pass without exhibiting indications of those elements of character for which he was afterwards so distinguished. Even before he could himself read the Bible, his ardent and susceptible mind is said to have been "deeply impressed with the beauty of its language, and the pathos of its narratives." As soon as he could announce a purpose, he declared that he would be a minister. He was but three years old when, having been missed one evening, he was at last found alone in the nursery, pacing up and down excited and absorbed, while he repeated to himself, as he walked, the words of David—"Oh, my son Absalom! Oh, Absalom, my son, my son!" A visitor once noticed his father coming out of a room with a singular smile, and on asking what had amused him, Mr. Chalmers replied, "It's Thomas there. I went in upon him, and disturbed him in his studies; and what do you think he exclaimed?—'It's too bad that I can't get even a room; I just wish that I had a world to myself to study in.'"

There has often occurred in the history of great minds, some particular epoch of intellectual quickening. Either a first acquaintance with a celebrated author, or a sudden interest imparted by some ennobling study or pursuit, falls like a spark upon powers hitherto latent, and a higher tone of mental vigour forthwith commences. So it was with Chalmers. Between his

mental constitution and the mathematical sciences, there seemed a strong natural affinity. No sooner was he engaged in them, than his opening energies put themselves forth at once, and thenceforward,—ardently, undividedly, and perseveringly. Pure geometry had especial attractions for him; nor did he ever cease to think that, from the closeness and consecutiveness of its successive steps, it furnishes one of the very best instruments for intellectual training. In 1795, he was enrolled as a student of Divinity: but theology occupied little of his thoughts. Although a son of pious parents, the great truths of religion had made little impression on the inner man; and when he found that the orthodoxy of the professors of St. Andrews was regulated rather by the standards of the Church, than their own convictions, contempt succeeded to indifference. This jarred with the transparent sincerity of his character. A friend once asked his opinion of a very masterly defence, by one of the professors, of one of the deepest points of Calvinistic doctrine, on the scheme of Jonathan Edwards. "I was not paying attention to it," he replied, "but thinking of something else,"—probably following out some mathematical problem. "Why," said his friend, "did you not attend to such an able disquisition as that?" "Because," said he, "I doubted the sincerity of the lecturer." Metaphysical researches were, however, just to his taste, and his first session did not pass over, according to the reminiscence of a fellow student, before "he studied 'Edwards on the Will' with such ardour, that he seemed to regard nothing else, and one was almost afraid of his mind losing its balance." The sublime

conception of the Godhead, which these studies suggested—as that eternal, all-pervading energy by which the whole series of events in the spiritual as well as the material universe was originated and sustained—filled his spirit with rapture and delight. “I remember, when a student of divinity,” said he, many years afterwards, alluding to this period, “and long ere I could relish evangelical sentiments, I spent nearly a twelvemonth in a sort of mental elysium;” and he has told a member of his family that, at this time, not a single hour elapsed in which this overpoweringly impressive imagination of the magnificence of the Godhead, did not stand out bright before his inward eye; and his custom was to wander out into the country, that, amid the quiet scenes of nature, he might luxuriate in the glorious conception. The “Christian Evidences,” the leading doctrines of “Natural and Revealed Religion,” and similar subjects, also necessarily occupied his attention—but still, together with all, and above all, his favourite science. To fill the mathematical chair in a university was the highest object of his ambition. Hence his desire for the parish of Kilmany;—it was within nine miles of St. Andrews. Surely, he could combine with his pastoral duty, the charge of the mathematical classes in that University. It was but to leave Kilmany on Monday morning and return on Saturday. No sooner, therefore, was he settled in his manse, than he threw himself into the duties of those classes, with an ardour and enthusiasm which lighted up the energies, and secured the confidence and attachment of all his pupils.

Being prevented the following winter from occupy-

ing the same post, he opened classes of his own at St. Andrew's, in opposition to those of the university, both for mathematics and chemistry. Nothing daunted by charges lodged against him at meetings of the Presbytery, he continued this course for several sessions. Intervals of leisure were farther occupied by writing on "Political Economy," on the politics of the day, and preparing articles for the "Edinburgh Encyclopædia." He had always a strong faith in the capabilities of the popular understanding, if rightly addressed; and acting on this, he also travelled about to the neighbouring towns in the capacity of an itinerant lecturer on chemistry. On this branch of knowledge he thought it desirable to enlighten even the good people of Kilmany, provided he chose a subject which might be turned to some useful account; he therefore exhibited the power of bleaching liquids. At the close of the lecture, the following edifying colloquy is said to have taken place between two of his hearers:—"Why, our minister," said the one, "is naething short o' a warlock; he was teaching the folk to clean claes but (without) soap." "Aye, woman," was the reply, "I wish he wad teach me to make parritch BUT meal." It is scarcely necessary to add to this brief outline of the nature of his leading pursuits, and of the character of his ministry, that the latter was unpopular—that his church was badly attended, and his private ministrations were followed with very trifling results.

Let us, however, take another look at Kilmany. A few more years—a very few, have now passed. It is Sunday, and the sound of the church-going bell is gladdening its hills and its valleys as usual; but now,

before it has even pealed out, the church will scarce hold the numbers that have flocked into it. Persons, not merely from the village homesteads, but from extreme distances in the country, and sometimes ministers from Edinburgh and Glasgow, find themselves jostled together in the same crowded pew.* And now the stupid wonder which used to sit on the countenances of a few villagers and farm servants, is turned into a fixed, intelligent, and devout attention. How is this? The same minister occupies the same pulpit. Whence, then, the difference? Ah! other themes now absorb his own mind, and rivet the attention of those he addresses. He bends over the pulpit with earnest entreaty as before, but it is no longer to denounce Newton, and Baxter, and Doddridge. It is to hold out to sinners the free gift of Christ and his salvation; it is to entreat every sinner to whom he speaks, to come to Christ just as he is, and "bury all his fears in the sufficiency of the great atonement." "He would bend over the pulpit," said one of his hearers at this time, "and press us to take the gift, as if he held it that moment in his hand, and would not be satisfied till every one of us had got possession of it."

And now the sermon is over, and the psalm is sung, and he arises to pronounce the blessing; but, no, he cannot; he breaks out afresh with some new entreaty, "unwilling to let us go," as the same person continues, "till he had made one more effort to persuade us to

* For some Sundays before he left Kilmany, it was found requisite to take out one of the large windows near the pulpit, that he might address at once both the in-door and the out-door congregation.

accept of it." Spiritual obedience, devotedness to God, and conformity to his will, are, at the same time, equally prominent characteristics of his ministry; but they are exhibited in a new light, and based on very different motives. And now the most indifferent scarcely feel unmoved; whilst one and another retires to weep and to pray, and to commence a new life in earnest.

We follow the preacher into his pastoral avocations, and there we find a similar revolution. The general visitation, which formerly was dispatched in a fortnight, now spreads over the whole year; whilst the sick, the dying, the awakened, are diligently and personally dealt with, often with much anxiety and earnest prayer. When practicable, he collects a few households together, for prayer and for reading the Scriptures, with such familiar remarks, and simple yet graphic illustrations, as present themselves. "I have a very lively recollection," said another of his hearers on these occasions, "of the intense earnestness of his addresses, when he visited at my father's house. He would unconsciously move forward in his chair to the very margin of it, in his anxiety to impart to the family and servants the impressions of eternal things that so filled his own soul. To illustrate faith, he said, 'It is just as if you threw out a rope to a drowning man. Faith is the hold he takes of it. It is fear which makes him grasp it with all his might; and the greater his fear the firmer his hold.' Again, to illustrate what the Spirit did with the word: 'This book, the Bible, is like a wide and beautiful landscape, seen afar off, dim and confused; but a good telescope will

bring it near, and spread out all its rocks and trees, and flowers, and verdant fields, and winding rivers, at one's very feet. This telescope is the Spirit teaching."

But whence this extraordinary mental transformation, so marvellous in its nature, so memorable in its consequences? Unless we form a right estimate of it, we shall be unable to understand his whole future life.

How much may be hidden in the germ of a single thought! A desire sprung up in the mind of a pious Nonconformist of the last century, to be useful to the souls of men beyond his little sphere of action and his limited day of labour. To the very useful work which was but the practical development of that mental aspiration, William Wilberforce, among hundreds of others, owed his sincere conversion to God, and the life of useful labour in which it issued. Wilberforce's "Practical View," prompted by the same motive, and scarcely less blessed by God, was again the special instrumentality by which Thomas Chalmers was "turned from darkness unto light." Family bereavement, and a serious illness, had sobered his mind, and impressed him with the importance of eternity. He found the very books he so much despised, or rather the truths they developed, were a source of solid comfort to a dying brother. A conversation with a pious sister awakened serious thoughts. He felt that the claims of religion were after all paramount. With his accustomed ardour he forthwith entered into a set of very strenuous resolutions, and made many a laborious effort to come up to the standard of the Divine requirements. But during this course he obtained little satisfaction, and felt no repose. "It was under these circum-

stances"—such is his own account—"that 'Wilberforce's View' was put into my hands. In the enthusiasm of the moment I had promised to read it, and therefore I did so, but more for the sake of consistency than any determination of heart. But as I got on in reading it, I felt myself on the eve of a great revolution in all my opinions about Christianity. I am now most thoroughly of opinion, and it is an opinion founded on experience, that on the system of 'Do this and live,' no peace, and, indeed, no true obedience, can ever be attained. It is, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.' When this belief enters the heart, joy and confidence enter along with it. The righteousness which we try to work out for ourselves, eludes our impotent grasp; and never can a soul arrive at true and permanent rest in the pursuit of this object. The righteousness which by faith we put on, secures our acceptance with God, and secures our interest in his promises, and gives us a part in those sanctifying influences, by which we are enabled to do, with aid from on high, what we never could do without it. We look to God in a new light—we see Him as a reconciled father; that love to Him which terror scares away, re-enters the heart, and with a new principle and a new power, we become new creatures in Jesus Christ our Lord." Perhaps a more graphic description, in few words, of the nature of the change, could scarcely have been given. Mr. Wilberforce's work was, however, mainly instrumental in its accomplishment, by leading him to the two greatest of all means—the word of God and prayer. "I take Wilberforce slowly," he writes, "and I read the chapters twice. As I proceed I feel

more and more delighted with his assertion of the supremacy of Scripture. A man should sit down to the Bible with the determination of taking his lesson just as he finds it—of founding his creed upon the sole principle of 'Thus saith the Lord.' "His regular and earnest study of the Bible," says his biographer, "was one of the first and most noticeable effects of Mr. Chalmers' conversion." His old friend, who had noticed, as before mentioned, that he 'never found him at his studies for the Sabbath,' could now very seldom come in, but he caught him poring over the pages of the Bible. The difference was too striking not to be noticed. 'I never come in now, Sir,' said he, with the freedom allowed him, "but I find you aye at your Bible." 'All too little, John; all too little,' was the significant reply.—"I derive much comfort," said he to a friend who was passing through similar religious anxiety to that which he had experienced, "from Heb. iii. 14. It is not two years since 'I would have blushed to give the advice which I am now to offer'—evidently as the result of experience—"and would probably have smiled at the man who should have offered it to myself—*earnest prayer*."*

* "I look," said he, in familiar conversation at a much later period of his life, "on Catechisms and Confessions as mere landmarks against heresy. If there had been no heresy, they would never have been wanted. It is putting them out of their place to look on them as magazines of truth. There's some of your stout orthodox folk, just over ready to stretch the Bible to square with their Catechism; all very well, all very *needful*, as a landmark; but" (kindling up) "what I say is, do not let that mutilated thing be thrown between me and the Bible." "Bacon," remarked his daughter, "compares the Bible

Such, then, was the nature of this remarkable charge. Heretofore, either religion had occupied a very secondary place in his regard, or he had struggled hard to reach the high and heavenly morality which the law requires,—looking to the atonement, so far as he regarded it at all, merely to eke out his deficiencies. And in doing this, to adopt his own expressive words, he had found the law “still kept ahead of him with a kind of over-matching superiority to all his efforts”—he had found it left him “a helpless defaulter;” an “unappeasable disquietude hung heavy upon his heart,” and “he walked among the elements of uncertainty and distrust.” Now he came to see, that the Saviour had already and completely done for him, what with so much strenuousness, but with so little success, he had been striving to do for himself, and that, renouncing all merit of his own, he must depend exclusively upon the merits of the Lord Jesus, as imputed to him, and received by faith alone. And in exercising this simple dependence—faith working by love—he not only felt an “abhorrence of sin,” but the most powerful motive, through the aid of the Holy Spirit, to all holiness of heart and life. “I sicken at all my own imperfect preparations”—such was the disclosure he made to an intimate friend—“I take one decisive

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to a wellspring, and says he were a huge fool that would not drink but from a tank.” “Ha! ha!” he rejoined, “where does Bacon say that? It’s nasty in the tank, too, whiles.” At another time, he remarked, with much emphasis, “I know no point of orthodoxy that is not susceptible of a practical treatment. Take an extreme case, the doctrine that man can do nothing of himself: I would just say, *pray* all the harder.”

and immediate step, and resign my all to the sufficiency of my Saviour. I feel my disease, and I feel that my want of lively conviction of it forms its most obstinate ingredient. But why linger without the threshold, in the face of a warm and urgent invitation, 'Come unto me'? I plead his own promise, that 'him that cometh He will in no wise cast out.' I come to Him with my heart, *such as it is*; and I pray that the operation of His Spirit, and the power of His sanctifying faith, would make it *such as it should be*. My abhorrence of sin is quickened by that very faith, which protects from its terrors. In the deep and mysterious sufferings of Christ, I see the dreadful testimony of heaven against it, and feel that it should be the daily prayer of Christians, that they may be enabled to put out from among them that hateful thing for which our Saviour died." "The acceptance of Christ," as he was accustomed very intelligibly to express himself, "with a full reliance on Him, and a confident appropriation of His righteousness, is the *transition step* to a life of happy and prosperous obedience—to that holiness, which is not to be looked upon merely as an evidence of salvation, but as an effective part of salvation,—as the very entrance upon heaven itself."

Hence the entire dedication of all his great powers to the glory of God, and the benefit of his fellow-men. Now his brilliant talents found their right occupation. Heretofore, he had lived only for things that are "seen and temporal;" thenceforward, to the last day of his earthly existence, he lived mainly for "things that are unseen and eternal." The unostentatious, but most impressive testimony, which, at a sudden emer-

gency, he once gave to this effect of the change, was not soon effaced from the recollection of those that heard it. A discussion had taken place in the General Assembly on the subject of Pluralities—the propriety, for instance, of a clergyman holding a city parochial charge, in conjunction with a university chair. To this, Dr. Chalmers was strongly opposed. Late in the debate, a speech on the other side of the question was closed by what the speaker thought a very home thrust—by a quotation from a *pamphlet*, in which the author asserted, from “the highest of all authority, the authority of his own experience,” that “after the satisfactory discharge of his parish duties, a minister may enjoy five days in the week of uninterrupted leisure for the prosecution of any science in which his taste may dispose him to engage.” Amidst breathless silence, Dr. Chalmers arose, and said, “Sir, that pamphlet I now declare to have been a production of my own, published twenty years ago;” and, after other remarks, added, “I do feel obliged to the reverend gentleman for reviving it, and for bringing me forward to make my public renunciation of what is there written. I now confess myself to have been guilty of a heinous crime, and I now stand a repentant culprit before the bar of this venerable Assembly. I was, at that time, Sir, more devoted to mathematics than to the literature of my profession. Alas! Sir, so I thought in my ignorance and pride; I have now no reserve in saying that the sentiment was wrong, and that in the utterance of it, I penned what was most outrageously wrong. Strangely blinded that I was! What, Sir, is the object of mathematical

science?—Magnitude, and the proportions of magnitude. But *then*, Sir, I had forgotten *two magnitudes*—I thought not of the littleness of time: I recklessly thought not of the greatness of eternity." "For a moment or two after these words were spoken," says Dr. Hanna, "a death-like stillness reigned throughout the house." "We shall search long," he justly adds, "in the lives of the most illustrious ere we find another instance, in which the sentiment, the act, the utterance, each rose to the same level of sublimity, and stood so equally embodied in the one impressive spectacle."


The results of the few last years of his ministry at Kilmany, as contrasted with those of the first, are strikingly alluded to in an "Address" to the inhabitants of that parish, after he had left. He solemnly takes them to record, that for seven years—so long as he was ignorant of the method by which the natural enmity of the heart to God is dissolved, "even by the free offer on the one hand, and the believing acceptance on the other, of the Gospel salvation"—although he had warmly expostulated against particular sins, and certainly did press very urgently the reformations of honour, and truth, and integrity, he never once heard of any such reformations being effected amongst them. All his arguments and all his vehemence had not the weight of a feather upon the social and moral habits of the people. It was not till he understood the utter alienation of the human heart from God—not till he took the scriptural method of laying down reconciliation and free forgiveness through the blood of Christ, and the Holy Spirit given through Christ's

mediatorship, was set forth as the unceasing object of dependence and earnest prayer, that he ever heard even of those subordinate reformatations which were the zealous and ultimate object of his earlier ministrations. And now he could appeal to many, who, with a sense of their Master's eye upon them, were striving "to adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour in all things." It was with such an experimental lesson as this, deeply engraved on his "heart of hearts," that he left the retired district of Kilmany to enter upon a densely populous parish in the city of Glasgow. "You have, at least, taught me," added he, "that to preach Christ is the only effective way of preaching morality in all its branches; and out of your humble cottages have I gathered a lesson, which I pray God I may be enabled to carry, with all its simplicity, into a wider theatre, and to bring with all the power of its subduing efficacy upon the vices of a more crowded population."

But we must now follow Dr. Chalmers into a far wider sphere of action. Henceforth, indeed, not only was his life one of unwearied activity, but to plan and accomplish *great* things seemed his very vocation. In this respect he must not be judged by the standard of other men. Many might have been equally faithful pastors. The labours of scarce any could have told with such power as his, upon large masses of the community; and yet it is most remarkable how he was led into them all, by the single irrepressible desire just alluded to, to "do good"—to occupy with the "ten talents committed" as one who must give account. The world-wide popularity which followed him was the very last object of his pursuit. Except so far as connected

with accompanying usefulness, no one despised it more heartily. We plead for him no exemption from the outbreaks of that "infection of nature which remaineth even in the regenerate." We have sufficient evidence in the private records of his diary, that there was no difference in his experience, in this respect, from that of any other Christian, except, indeed, so far as the peculiarity of his position subjected him, not unfrequently, to a more severe conflict. But we may say, and say with truth, that scarcely, if ever, did one tread such high paths in theology and literature, and society, and useful enterprise, who at the same time demeaned himself with such childlike simplicity among his fellows, and walked so humbly with his God. In his friendships and intimate relationships, no one was more "lovely and pleasant" in his life—no one has left behind him a memory more fragrant with endearing recollections. It has been well observed by his biographer, that "behind the outer history of his life, there lay an inner spiritual history, which made the other what it was." This is most true; and unless we examine the former in the light of the latter, we shall have a very erroneous view of his real character.

It is remarkable that his first two great efforts to benefit large classes were simultaneously directed to the extremes of the social scale. He had noticed the deleterious influence of a plausible objection against Christianity. Is it likely, it was said, that on a theatre so narrow, and for a race so insignificant, such high and distinguished attentions should ever have been lavished? With this infidel insinuation, he determined thoroughly to grapple, and in his proposed mode of



carrying out this design, he had also ulterior aims—to break the lines which had too long separated the literary from the religious public,—to win an audience in quarters where evangelical Christianity was nauseated and despised—and to show even to these, that the magnitude of the interests which human salvation involve, do but throw around the character and doings of the God of the New Testament a splendour far higher than even that which the sovereignty of the heavens confers. His “Astronomical Discourses,” as they were afterwards termed, were heard with breathless attention, by week-day congregations, in the Tron Church, Glasgow. In January, 1817, they were announced for publication; but neither the publisher, any more than the author, with his accustomed humility, entertained any very sanguine expectations of the extraordinary success that awaited this volume. It was even proposed by the former that, as was usual in cases of sermons, it should be published by subscription. This, however, was declined by Dr. Chalmers; and in ten weeks alone, no less than 6,000 copies had been disposed of. Before the end of the year, nine editions had been called for, and nearly 20,000 copies were in circulation. The attention which it excited was unequalled in modern literature; nor could a single volume be named which has done more not only to soften the prejudices which the infidelity of natural science engenders, but to recommend the peculiar doctrines of the Gospel, even to minds the most inaccessible to its influence. It was shortly after the publication of this work, that Dr. Chalmers was called to London, to preach the annual

sermon for the London Missionary Society; and nothing could surpass the extraordinary popularity which attended his ministrations during his short stay in the metropolis. One even of his most intimate friends describes his missionary sermon as "the most astonishing display of human talent that perhaps ever commanded sight or hearing;" and states, "that nothing from the Tron Church ever exceeded it. The carrying forward of minds never was so visible to me: a constant assent of the head from the whole people accompanied all his paragraphs, and the breathlessness of expectation permitted not the beating of a heart to agitate the stillness."—"All the world wild about Dr. Chalmers!" so writes Mr. Wilberforce, in his diary at this time. "He seems truly pious, simple, and unassuming." Again, on Sunday, May 25th, 1817:—"Off early with Canning, Huskisson, and Lord Binnely, to the Scotch Church, London Wall, to hear Dr. Chalmers. Bobus Smith, Lord Elgin, Harrowby, etc. I was surprised to see how greatly Canning was affected: at times he was quite melted into tears." On the afternoon of the same day, Dr. Chalmers himself found it almost impossible to effect an entrance into the Scotch Church, Swallow-street, and after gazing at the scene outside was on the point of retiring. For a long time the dense mass without refused to be persuaded that he was indeed the individual whom they were so anxious to hear. When Mr. Wilberforce arrived, all the ordinary entrances were impassable. In this emergency, as there was some unoccupied space still round the pulpit, a plank was projected from one of the windows till

it rested upon an iron palisade. "I was surveying this breach," says Mr. W., "with a cautious and inquiring eye, when Lady D.—no shrimp, you must observe—entered boldly before me, and proved that it was practicable." The notice that Mr. Wilberforce gives of this sermon in his diary is brief, but very expressive:—"Chalmers most awful on carnal and spiritual man." It would seem that the preacher dealt more directly on this occasion than on any former one, with truths bearing directly on the individual salvation of his hearers. The delight with which the distinguished philanthropist must have heard the no less distinguished preacher, can only be appreciated by one similarly privileged, though nothing of this kind appears in Mr. Wilberforce's journal;—to one, we mean, who has the heartfelt satisfaction of believing that he may have been instrumental not merely in the salvation of one soul, but, through him, of many, many more. No wonder, likewise, that Dr. Chalmers should have reckoned the acquaintance of Mr. Wilberforce, as by far the most valuable acquisition that he made in London.

The other great objects, which simultaneously engrossed the larger portion of his time and energies, were the temporal, and more especially the spiritual, benefit of the lower orders. The questions of pauperism and the poor-laws had occupied his thoughts when at Kilmany, and had been more especially forced on his attention in the populous parish over which he presided at Glasgow. When in London, he made from the pulpit of Surrey Chapel a bold and uncompromising attack on the principle and expediency of all

forms of legalized charity ; and he saw no reason subsequently to change his opinions, although he carried few minds with him to the extent of his aversion to this principle. On another of his great measures, however, there can be no difference of opinion. He found the lower orders, in the two parishes to which he was successively appointed in Glasgow, such as they are but too often met with in large towns—neglected, degraded, and demoralized. But he maintained that such degradation was neither a necessary nor an irremediable evil. The one dominant idea which he had brought with him from Kilmany, and which ruled the efforts of his lifetime, was the perfect practicability of assimilating the worst conditioned town to the best conditioned country parish ; and the instrumentality by which he proposed to effect this, was simply *division of labour*, in connection with those parochial means and influences, which in thinly peopled districts had secured so good an education for the young, and such a moral elevation of the general community. These, if fairly employed, would, he conceived, be equally efficacious amid the densest city population. “Let but a Christian philanthropist assume a district,”—such was his manner of expressing himself, alike when first entering on the enterprise, and when success had proved its practicability and advantage—“and give his time and attention to those who reside in it, and cultivate an acquaintance with them founded on good will, it will be found that there will scarcely a shut door or a shut heart be ever met with in the prosecution of such an enterprise as this.” At first, although he made a stupendous effort at the personal

visitation of a parish containing from 11,000 to 12,000 souls, he could accomplish little for want of fellow-labourers. To establish local schools was, however, an easier matter; and this, in itself a very important measure, was, in the course of a year, made instrumental to more important results. A new teacher having been obtained, Dr. Chalmers asked one of his elders to go with him to the Salt-market, to obtain fresh scholars. They secured a room at the entrance of a long close, wherein alone they found a sufficient number. This idea of a separate school, in and for a single close, pleased him amazingly. "Yea," he exclaimed, "this is the true local plan. We will *just* fix down Mr. R. to this close; we will make it his parish, let him visit all the families here, and look after all the children. That will be an effectual preaching of the Gospel from door to door." By dividing the parish into forty-two sections, and appointing a teacher to each, he soon raised the number of Sunday-scholars from 100 to 1,200. "These schools continue," says Mr. Stow, "to the present day; and there have flowed from this small local Sabbath-school society, eight other societies in different parts of the city and suburbs. I consider, had Dr. Chalmers done nothing more than promote the principle of this local system of Sabbath-schools, he would not have lived in vain."

But it was during the four years of his ministry at St. John's, that he was enabled to carry out these plans with the greatest freedom and success. This parish contained a population of 10,304 souls, and out of the 2,161 families of which it was composed, there were as many as 815 who had no seats in any

place of worship, and that proportion gave no adequate idea of the extent to which church-going habits had been relinquished. It was, moreover, the poorest parish in the city, yet Dr. Chalmers entered readily upon the onerous task. His strong faith and hopeful confidence in the efficacy of moral and spiritual influences, both human and divine, was not easily daunted. He divided this entire parish into twenty-five districts, and reviving the ancient order of deacons, which, in the Presbyterian Church, had fallen into disuse, he appointed over each of these districts an elder and a deacon,—the spiritual interests of his district being committed to the former, and its temporal interests to the latter. That spiritual instruction and temporal relief should not be administered by the same person, was an arrangement to which he always attached the greatest importance. In this parish, as in the Tron Church parish, the education of the young also occupied a great share of his attention. And, in addition to his Sunday-school system, he was successful in obtaining the erection of two schoolhouses, and endowing four efficient teachers. Other buildings were likewise in process of erection when he left.

During all this time, and in addition to many other engagements, of which the brevity of this sketch prohibits notice, his pulpit labours, we must recollect, were unremitting, and his popularity suffered but little diminution; and we have the testimony of competent judges, that, at least, the immediate and visible effects of his preaching, upon the dense mass who filled every nook of his churches, were some of the most remarkable ever witnessed. "The congregation," it is said,

"was sometimes intensely excited, leaning forward in the pews like a forest bending under the power of a hurricane, looking stedfastly at the preacher, and listening in breathless astonishment." The following, among other instances of the pressure in the Tron Church, occurred one Sunday evening. His hearers had been admitted, as usual, long before service began, and a space between the main inner door and the pulpit had been kept vacant for the purpose of ventilation, the door being fastened within; no sooner, however, did he make his appearance, than crash after crash followed in rapid succession at the outside of this door, intermingled with screams, chiefly from terrified females. Two of the doorkeepers within at length rushed to the door, but found it evidently yielding; they speedily made good their retreat; and, in an instant, the door gave way with a report like thunder. The rush was tremendous, and the torrent flowed on till every vacant space was literally crammed. The occurrence grieved and discomposed the preacher, and he administered a sharp rebuke to those who had occasioned it. "On walking home with him," said Dr. Wardlaw, "we talked *inter alia* of this occurrence: he expressed, in his pithy manner, his great annoyance at such crowds. 'I preached the same sermon in the morning,' said he, 'and, to prevent this oppressive annoyance, I intimated that I should preach it again in the evening;' and then, with the most ingenuous guilelessness, he added, 'Have *you* ever tried that plan?' I did not smile, I laughed outright. 'No, no,' I replied, 'my good friend; there are but very few of us that are under the necessity of having recourse to the use of means for

getting thin audiences.' He enjoyed the joke, and he felt, though he modestly disowned the compliment."

Was then a mind like that of Chalmers' proof against the overwhelming seductions of a popularity such as this? Let us take one glance at the inner man, and then we shall at least see how he watched and prayed against a temptation, out of which few indeed have escaped without injury. Thus runs the private diary at this period:—"Mar. 5th. Cannot yet record a close walk with God. Got impatient with one man who called on me, and with—— in the evening. Oh, for a humbler and nearer course of devotedness to the will of my Saviour!—9th. Not yet. Trusting that I am finding my way to Christ, as the Lord my strength. Oh, guard me against the charms of human praise. —10th, *Sunday*. Preached in the Gorbals in the afternoon, and exceeded. Oh, for self-command in the pulpit! I was not satisfied with my sermon; and I fear, or rather, I know and am sure, that personal distinction is one of my idols. Oh, that I could bring it out, O Lord, and slay it before thee!—14th. Not yet. Oh, my God, keep me humble, and regular, and mindful of Thee, and diligent in all that is obviously right.—24th, *Sunday*. Preached to the magistrates. Vanity—violent exertion, prompted by vanity—a preaching of self—a want of singleness of aim after the glory of God. Oh, my heavenly Father, sweep away these corruptions, and enable me to struggle with them!"

It was in very expressive words that, at a later period of his Glasgow ministry, he gave utterance to the estimate of popularity which dear-bought expe-

rience had purchased. After referring to the "peaceful popularity" which may be "earned by activity in the home walk of private benevolence, the popularity of the heart, the only popularity that is worth the aspiring after, the popularity that is won in the bosom of families and by the side of death-beds;" he added, most expressively, "There is *another*, a high and a far-sounding popularity, which is indeed a most worthless article, felt by all who have it most, to be greatly more oppressive than gratifying—a popularity of stare, and pressure, and animal heat, and a whole tribe of other annoyances which it brings around the person of its unfortunate victim—a popularity which rifles home of its sweets, and by elevating man above his fellows, places him in a region of desolation, where the intimacies of human fellowship are unfelt, and where he stands a conspicuous mark for the shafts of malice, and envy, and detraction—a popularity which, with its head among the storms and its feet on the treacherous quicksands, has nothing to lull the agonies of its tottering existence but the hosannahs of a drivelling generation."

It was matter of equal surprise and regret to many, that Dr. Chalmers should leave a post of such extensive usefulness as that which he occupied at Glasgow, for merely a professor's chair in a distant university. But he judged rightly. His leading motive for the change was still the same as ever—the devoted exercise of all his powers on as large a scale as possible, for the benefit and salvation of human souls. He was of opinion that a literary office in a university, through which the future ministers of a church pass in numerous succes-

sion every year, was a higher station in the vineyard of Christian usefulness, than the office of a single minister of a single congregation. He argued thus : "He who makes a machine is more productively employed than he who, without it, engages immediately in the work. He who does the work is not so productively employed as he who multiplies the doers. The elevated office of a Christian minister is to 'catch men.' There is, however, another still more elevated, and that, too, in regard of Christian productiveness—which is to be employed in teaching and training the 'fishers of men.' Should there be a fountain, out of which there emanated a thousand rills, it would be to the source that I should carry the salt of purification, and not to any of the streams which flow from it." Another circumstance undoubtedly likewise influenced his decision. In the constant toil, bustle, and excitement of Glasgow—already telling unfavourably on his robust constitution—it was utterly impossible to devote any time to literary pursuits, or the publication of important works; but all this would be compatible with the comparatively light duties of a professorial chair. And we can now see how greatly his general usefulness would have been abridged, had he been prevented from occupying his talents in this direction also. Many men were qualified to occupy, with fidelity, the pulpit he relinquished, and carry on his plans at Glasgow; but who else could have furnished the works that will be now handed down to posterity in his name? Neither were his labours as a professor—for a few years in the chair of moral philosophy at St. Andrew's, and more especially afterwards for many years as professor of

divinity at Edinburgh—without an abundant reward. He was instrumental not only in kindling the enthusiasm and forming the minds of some hundreds, at the most critical period of their moral history, but in sending them forth throughout the parishes of Scotland, deeply impressed with the responsibility of the work in which they were about to engage, and supremely desirous of nothing less than to “win souls to Christ.” As an outward indication of his success, we may refer to the character of the majorities in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland—in a few years as much on the evangelical side of all questions as they had been before decidedly opposed. No doubt other causes contributed to this result; but it was calculated, and not without reason, as no small element in the success, that at least nine-tenths of Dr. Chalmers’ pupils always rallied round their venerated instructor. Towards the close of his life he was accustomed to say, that he might travel throughout Scotland, from one end to another, and spend each night in the manse of one of his former pupils.

His position at St. Andrew’s did not, indeed, at first promise any great results. The spirit of “moderatism” was dominant in the town and University. “Perhaps there is no town in Scotland,” he writes, shortly after his arrival there, “more cold, and meagre, and moderate in its theology, than St. Andrew’s.” The isolation which he first felt soon passed into opposition, and he was vexatiously and unwillingly involved in controversy with his colleagues. Neither was there any agency in the town fitted on the smallest scale to carry out operations for the spiritual benefit of the inhabit-

anta. Under these circumstances, it is most interesting to see how he embraced every opportunity of usefulness, however small, which occurred, and with how large an amount if not of present, yet certainly of ultimate success. At first, without imparting his peculiar views to any one, he quietly marked out a district of the town on his favourite plan, adjacent to his peculiar residence, all the families of which he visited, and invited the children to attend a class in his own house on Sunday evenings. At first the attendance was limited: but what importance did he attach to any, the least, instrumentality bearing upon immortal interests! For that little group, composed of the poorest children around him, he prepared as carefully, as for his class in the University. It speedily increased, and some of the parents obtained leave to be present likewise, till the room was crowded. In his third session, the class even became burdensome for numbers; but then more important claims upon his Sunday evenings had arisen. Some young men—at first very few in number—requested religious instruction at this hour, and these gradually augmented, till his large dining-room was completely crammed with students. "His instructions," says Dr. Miller, of Glasgow, then an auditor, "were on the leading topics of Christian doctrine and personal religion: very simple and conversational they were, but all the more valuable on that account. I have good reason for being confident that on many hearts, impressions were made by these hallowed exercises, that have yielded—and will yield—fruit unto God." Under these circumstances, he devolved the entire care of his Sunday-

school upon one pupil, on whose ability and heartfelt piety he placed entire confidence. But what is more remarkable—by the example, and counsel, and encouragement of Dr. Chalmers, the young men were induced to engage in similar labours. The whole town was at length divided into districts, families were visited, and flourishing schools established in every necessitous quarter. The parish ministers agreed to this arrangement, and the benefit of the plan was not confined to St. Andrew's, but acted upon in adjoining districts. Missionary associations were at the same time formed, meetings to promote them were well attended, prejudice was softened, and a new respect and attachment to evangelical Christianity in many cases created. "Historic truth," says Dr. Duff, himself one of the students of that period, "requires it to be recorded that, as a whole, the students of St. Andrew's were, previously to the coming of Dr. Chalmers, a singularly Godless, Christless class. At the United College there was only one who was reputed to be pious, and who dared to face the derision and scorn of being so reputed. Nor was St. Mary's or the Divinity College much better. Indeed, some of the divinity students were more notorious for their impiety, immorality, and riotous revellings than any in the Philosophy College. Such was the University of St. Andrew's before the day of its merciful visitation in 1823—such the realm of spiritual death which was then disturbed by the tread of a *living* man. The Lord was graciously pleased to remember St. Andrew's for the Father's sake, and to send His servant to be the honoured instrument of a great revival, which should redound to His own

praise and glory." "Those who could compare what St. Andrew's was immediately before Dr. Chalmers' residence there, with what it was two or three years after his arrival, were constrained to feel that no language could more appropriately express the *greatness of the change* than that of the prophet Isaiah—"The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly," etc., Isa. xxxv. 1, 2. Many of the three hundred students who passed through the moral philosophy class-rooms, at that period, are now filling posts of honour and usefulness at home; and it is still more worthy of notice, that a large proportion from such a number, including Dr. Duff, devoted themselves to missionary labour abroad.

It is impossible to notice, in this brief sketch, the many minor labours of love which Dr. Chalmers found time to conduct simultaneously with his more extensive and important engagements. One instance of the kind is mentioned by the late Mr. J. Montgomery. In the course of one of his earlier journeys to London, Dr. Chalmers called on the poet at Sheffield. Their conversation turned principally on the Moravian missions, upon which he said, evidently not from a sudden impulse, but a cherished purpose in his heart, "I mean to raise 500*l*. for the Brethren's missions this year." "'Five hundred pounds!' I cried," said Mr. Montgomery, "'for our poor missions; I never heard of such a thing before;'" and within myself I said, 'I will watch you, doctor.' I did so, and traced him through sermons, subscriptions, collections, and donations, till these had realised a sum nearer to six than

five hundred pounds. Now, considering in how many comprehensive concerns he was at that very time, putting forth all his strength, originating, promoting, and accomplishing economical, local, patriotic, and Christian plans for the well-being of populous communities, in comparison of which this effort was like the putting forth of his little finger only; yet, I confess, that 'small thing,' not to be despised, gave me a most magnificent idea of the intellectual, moral, and sanctified power for good, with which the human being who stood before me was endowed from on high."

One more instance may be added. When engaged in laborious duties at Edinburgh, the suburban village of the Water of Leith, which lay near his residence, painfully attracted his notice, as containing a very neglected and depraved population. From a survey taken by visitation from house to house, he discovered that out of 1,366 persons, only 143 had seats in any place of worship. With the aid of a few friends, he accordingly provided a missionary for this district, preparatory to the erection of a church and parish. After household ministrations for half a year, the missionary's labours were repaid by a congregation on the Sabbath, of between 300 and 400, the majority of whom had been utter strangers to the ordinances of the Gospel; and this promising enterprise continued to have the benefit of his personal superintendence.

We have, moreover, entered into no enumeration of Dr. Chalmers' literary labours. It is scarcely necessary that we should. By his works he still speaks. It may suffice to notice, that in the year 1835, shortly after the publication of his "Bridgewater Treatise," he

appeared in the University of Oxford in full academic costume, having received at that place the distinguished literary honour of the degree of Doctor of Laws ; quite unprecedented in the case of a clergyman of the Scotch Church. "I have long had," he remarked, "the utmost affection and reverence for the University of Oxford, but I never dreamed of the possibility of being admitted within its pale." Neither can we follow him into another field of labour, in which his untiring energies and overwhelming eloquence were ever turned to the best account—we allude to his unwearied attendance and exertions in the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ; his memorable addresses, and his strenuous efforts in behalf of church-extension. It was his deliberate opinion, and one from which, although he thought himself compelled to leave the Scottish Church, he never swerved—that established National Churches afford the only adequate machinery for the moral and Christian instruction of a people ; that by it and it only can the whole mass of the people, down to the meanest and most worthless, be reached and thoroughly pervaded. Only a few days before his death, in a conversation which he had on this subject with some Independent ministers in the West of England, he is said to have been frequent and emphatic in his declarations, that he was quite satisfied, from the working of it in the Free Church, that Voluntarism was not calculated to do what it professed. The lectures which he delivered on this subject in the Hanover Square-rooms, in 1838, will not soon be forgotten. They were most numerous attended—peers, bishops, and members of parliament listened to them

with the greatest attention, and the impression they made was as deep as it was lasting. It should be noticed that it was in every respect his own view of establishments that he defended with fearless consistency; and that he maintained the independence of the Scottish church to be as necessary to its well-being as its endowments. "I had heard Dr. Chalmers," said one of his friends, "on many great occasions, but probably his London lectures afforded the most remarkable illustrations of his extraordinary power, and must be ranked among the most signal triumphs of oratory in any age."

From this time, till the year 1843, Dr. Chalmers was deeply engaged in that great ecclesiastical controversy which terminated in the disruption of the Church of Scotland. Frequent journeys to London, and interviews with Her Majesty's Ministers, constant correspondence, sometimes protracted debates, and a perpetual hurry of business,—weary days, and anxious nights,—now tasked his energies to the utmost. It is delightful and most instructive to turn to the truthful records of his private journal, in which alone he ever disclosed the emotions of the hidden man of the heart, in this period of turmoil. "Let me renew my efforts on the occasion that lies this day before me. I have been in heaviness from various causes—the want of public sympathy with our Church question—perhaps the amount of time not filled up in interesting occupation—the sense of manifold infirmities—a feeling, to a certain extent, of wounded vanity, from the way in which I was met by argument in a recent committee—all of which causes can only be counteracted by a transfer-

ence of thought and affection to the objects of that boundless and elevated panorama which faith places before and around the soul. Then would there be trust in God, a quiet assurance that He would bring good out of evil—a busy engagement of the heart with His service—peace of conscience in the fellowship of Christ—the absorption of self and all selfishness in the glory of our Father in heaven, and the good of men.” —“ Sadly exercised with adverse tidings from London anent the church, and all that is heavenly takes flight by giving way to other things.” —“ To-day there is the opening of a great hope in church matters. I long for my own deliverance from the turmoils of public life. I feel somewhat the advantage which a sally of my own has given to a hostile multitude against me, and yet I am supported in a way that is marvellous under every visitation. O do Thou, the very God of peace, sanctify me wholly, and enable me to cut off the right hand, and pluck out the right eye. Deliver me from the woe of those by whom offences come ; save me from the sin that does most easily beset me, and, above all, from hurting the souls of others. Keep my heart in the love of Thyself, and enable me to keep it with all diligence. Enable me to bid away all thoughts of evil and vanity, and to keep myself holy in soul and spirit and body, which are the Lord’s !” —“ Carried by news from London, reports from Edinburgh, etc., teach me the lesson, O heavenly Father, to be still, and know that Thou art God. Things are thickening.” —“ My eternity is at stake, and the great adversary is plying me with a fresh and formidable temptation. Another approaching controversy, too, which may require all

wisdom. O for holiness. Take pity upon me, O God, a miserable offender.”—“A letter yesternight from Dr. Gordon, enclosing one from Lord Aberdeen, which will require a strenuous exercise of wisdom and charity. My God, guide and govern all my movements. It is high time now to be seeking the pearl of great price, and for this let there be an intent looking unto Jesus—a strong and simple faith in Him—the love that cleaves to Him, the friendship for Him that will do whatsoever He commandeth. I pray for the fruits of the Spirit, for the mortification of the flesh, and altogether for my establishment in the way of salvation, and of my feet in the way of new obedience.”—“Why do I not go forth as a forgiven and vested creature; forgiven all my trespasses, vested with the righteousness of Christ. There is one temptation that I pray for grace to overcome; I am most sensitively alive to the disgust of certain peculiarities in the manners of people, for whom I have no taste, and with whom I feel no congenial sympathy. My God, I would press forward to the triumph of charity in such a case as this. Enable me to honour all men, to pay them all the regard which I owe to immortals; to please not myself, but to take up my cross, and make a daily and hourly sacrifice of antipathies for their sake. Solemnised by the thought that this is the first day of the Assembly, I pray for God’s special guidance and favour to the Church of Scotland. And I furthermore pray for direction, and the Spirit of wisdom, to me, O God.”

It was no difference on doctrinal questions, or on Church government, or on National Churches, that

divided the Scottish Establishment. "Though we quit the Establishment," said Dr. Chalmers, "we go out on the Establishment principle; we quit a vitiated Establishment, but would rejoice in returning to a pure one. To express it otherwise, we are the advocates for a national recognition and national support of religion, and we are not voluntaries." The disruption was solely occasioned by the terms and conditions of connexion, imposed by the State upon the Church. With these, the Dissentients thought it would be inexpedient, and even unlawful, to comply. Whatever opinion may be formed of the correctness of this decision, all must admire the sublime moral spectacle which their conduct presented. Even when the day for protestation arrived, the adverse party did not expect to witness such high-toned conscientiousness—such voluntary and unsparing self-sacrifice. "Mark my words," wrote one of the best informed and most sagacious citizens of Edinburgh, a day or two previously, "mark my words, not forty of them will go out." When, however, Dr. Welsh, the Moderator, had finished reading his protest in the General Assembly, and having bowed to the Commissioner, had turned and proceeded to the door—and Dr. Chalmers, as if roused from a reverie, had seized eagerly his hat to hurry after him—all the benches on the left were speedily deserted; and it was soon discovered that considerably above 400 ministers, and a larger number of elders, had withdrawn. Obligated by the pressure of the crowd which was congregated outside to form into a procession, they moved on in a column of the length of above a quarter of a mile, to the New Hall prepared

for their reception. Various were the feelings that pervaded the numberless spectators who lined the streets, and thronged each window, and door, and balcony. Some gazed in stupid wonder. A few were seen to smile, as if in mockery. Here and there, as the child or wife of some outgoing minister caught sight of a husband's or a father's form, accomplishing an act which was to leave his family homeless and unprovided, warm tears formed, which, as if ashamed of them, the hand of faith wiped away. Lord Jeffrey, who could have had little sympathy with the hidden principle which actuated the seceding brethren, was sitting reading in his quiet room, when a friend burst upon him, saying, "Well, what do you think of it; more than four hundred of them are actually out." Lord Jeffrey flung his book aside, started upon his feet, and exclaimed, "I'm proud of my country; there is not another country upon earth where such a deed could have been done."

He who had been the very mainspring of the entire movement, was, of course, unanimously chosen as Moderator of the New Assembly. Laborious duties were consequently again entailed upon him, for which no one was intellectually and morally more fit, but which weighed oppressively upon his now declining years. They did not, however, prevent him from designing and carrying into effect one more important undertaking. It was the last of that series of public measures, in which his useful life was spent, and deserves a brief notice. He conceived the design of making a last personal experiment in some specific locality in Edinburgh, of that peculiar instrumentality,

which he had all along considered, if thoroughly worked, to be the only effectual means of attacking the profound abyss of ignorance and irreligion, into which the working population of large towns had sunk. "I have determined," he says, in a letter on July 26th, 1844, "to assume a poor district of two thousand people, and superintend it myself, though it be a work greatly too much for my declining strength and means. Yet such do I hold to be the efficiency of the method, with the Divine blessing, that perhaps, as the concluding act of my public life, I shall make the effort to exemplify what as yet I have only expounded." The locality selected was the West Port, a part of Edinburgh to which a few years before an infamous notoriety had been given, by the secret murders of Burke and his associates. Out of a gross population of two thousand, three-fourths were living, in the midst of abundant contiguous church accommodation, without the slightest regard to Christian ordinances, or even to the habits and decencies of Christian life. Aided, however, by a band of zealous associates, Dr. Chalmers went hopefully forward. He divided the district into twenty sections, to each of which a visitor was appointed. These visitors were to converse, read the Scriptures, and endeavour to promote, in every possible way, the spiritual welfare of the people. A school was opened, commencing with sixty-four day and fifty-seven evening scholars, a number which in the course of a year amounted to two hundred and fifty. A tan-loft was next opened for public worship; here services were regularly continued thrice every Sunday, till the congregations became so large, that it was found absolutely

requisite to build a church for the West Port, as well as a school-house. A library, a savings'-bank, a washing-house, speedily followed. Five-sixths of the sittings were let as soon as the church was opened; and at the first communion, over which it was Dr. Chalmers' privilege to preside, there were as many as one hundred communicants from the West Port alone. While this enterprise was going on, it was his custom to ask the agents at the West Port to meet him occasionally at breakfast. In general conversation, Dr. Chalmers is said not to have excelled; but on occasions like these, in a select party of particular friends, and when he could expatiate upon some of his favourite themes, he frequently appeared to great advantage. His power of pithy expression—especially when he made use of vernacular Scotch—his intense moral earnestness, the benignity and guileless simplicity of his character, are said to have received many of their happiest illustrations at such times. At one of them, he was told of an objection started by a minister, that if many churches like that of the West Port were erected, each of them would abstract hearers from the existing churches. It created a storm of momentary indignation. "And for the sake," said he, "of the paltry few that would drop from this and that man's congregation, am I to let the masses live in dirt and die in darkness? Horrible! to make a rabbit warren of human souls! Can that man believe what he preaches, who would stand by and see hundreds sink into an unprovided eternity, rather than run the risk of Mr. John This [spoken with an ironical drawl] or Mr. James That being lost to his congregation? There is a vast deal of spurious faith, and I see

more and more the meaning of Christ's question, 'When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith in the earth?' But [the indignation gradually giving way to despondency] I have little hope of the impracticable understanding of the general public. People talk of the enlightened public; I just look upon the public as a big baby, eh, mon [turning archly to his little grandson] if a' the gowks in the world were brought together, they would fill a great muckle house." "How the spirit of the departed," says his biographer, "would have rejoiced, had he lived to witness what the West Port now presents. At the same cost, among the same class, within the same limits, and during the same time, there never have been accomplished in this or any other land, anything like the same educational and spiritual results. It stands, the only lesson in which the depths of city ignorance and vice have been sounded to the very bottom; nor can the possibility of our cleansing the foul basement story of our social edifice be doubted any longer."

His "Institutes of Theology," "Daily Scripture Readings," and some contributions to the *North British Review*, were some of the last literary undertakings in which Dr. Chalmers was engaged. Far more rapidly than he anticipated, he was now fast nearing the harbour of everlasting rest.

On Friday, May 28th, 1847, he returned to Edinburgh, after a visit he had been paying to London, chiefly on business connected with the Free-Church, with whose General Assembly he expected to be engaged at the beginning of the ensuing week. On the following day he experienced much exhaustion, but

said he was not ill; he merely required a little rest. On Sunday he attended, as was his custom, the Free Church at Morningside, and called upon an old and highly esteemed friend on his return home. In the evening, apparently in his usual health, he walked in his garden; while sauntering round which, he was overheard by one of his family saying, in low but very earnest tones, "Oh, Father!—my Heavenly Father!" On returning to the house, his conversation was cheerful, and even joyous. A shadow passed over him, when some disquieting thought arose; but it was speedily dispelled as he remarked, that "disquietudes lay light upon a man who could fix his heart upon heaven." After supper, addressing Mr. Gemmell, who was staying with him, he said, "I am sorry again to ask you to give worship to-night; but if you will do so, *I expect to give worship to-morrow morning.*" "I had seen him frequently," says Mr. G., "in his happiest moods, but I never saw him happier. Christian benevolence beamed from his countenance, sparkled in his eye, and played upon his lips. Immediately after prayers he withdrew, and bidding his family remember that they must be early to-morrow, he waved his hand, saying a general good night."

At eight o'clock on the following morning, an inquiry was sent to him about a parcel of papers, which it had been supposed he would have forwarded at an earlier hour. His housekeeper knocked at his room door, but received no reply. At length she entered the room to call him. Still there was no response. It was the chamber of death. He was not, for God had taken him.

"The cry at midnight came,
He started up to hear;
A mortal arrow pierced his frame—
He fell, but felt no fear.

"His spirit, with a bound,
Left its encumb'ring clay;
His tent, at sunrise, on the ground
A darken'd ruin lay."

Another midnight cry will soon sound in the ears of every reader of these lines: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him!" And then will He "reckon with His servants." The examples of the "great," as well as "good," are of especial value, as affording the most readily discernible instances of the right use of talents. It is not the number of them that has been entrusted to us—let us ever remember—but the manner in which they have been occupied, that will elicit the "Well done" of the Great Master. Perchance, however, a careful examination of the footprints of the "great" and "good" may reveal the existence of more talents in our own possession, than we have been accustomed to acknowledge. The questions for each to put to himself are these:—"How much owest thou unto thy Lord?"—What hast thou received?

BE YE FOLLOWERS OF THEM, WHO THROUGH FAITH
AND PATIENCE INHERIT THE PROMISES.

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